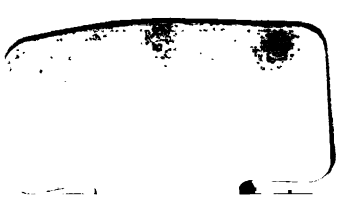

THREE YEARS IN ROUMANIA.

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BY
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PREFACE.

RECENT events in the East have brought Roumania prominently to the front. Much interest has therefore been excited in the public mind with regard to a principality hitherto almost unknown.

To the best of my belief, no book on the country has ever been written by an Englishman in the English language. It is with a view to supplying a want admittedly felt that I have penned this work.

I have been encouraged in this attempt by the attention vouchsafed to certain articles of mine which have appeared in *Temple Bar* and the *University Magazine*, and short extracts from which are to be found in these pages from time to time.

My object has been throughout to give my readers a general idea of the country, without going too much into detail, which might have proved wearisome to many.

Roumania is not a first-class State. It is, in my opinion, amply sufficient to draw a sketch of the land and its inhabitants, their customs and history, derived for the most part from the practical experience furnished by a residence of three years in Roumania.

The more ardent student of politics and commerce I would refer particularly to the standard works of Vaillant, Regnault, and Obédénare, to all of which I must acknowledge my obligations for much valuable information. The accurate and elaborate statistical tables published by the last-named author I have found especially useful.

In conclusion, I would have it distinctly understood that this is no party book. I wish the Roumanians well, but I do not forget that it is my duty to paint them as they are. I trust that I have not altogether failed in my efforts to throw into my sketch, such as it is, a proper mixture of light and shade.

J. W. OZANNE.

CONTENTS.

THREE YEARS IN ROUMANIA.

CHAPTER I.

DOWN THE "BEAUTIFUL BLUE DANUBE."

It was in the autumn of 1870 that, weary for a time of London life and burning for a change, I accepted a post which ended by keeping me three years at Bucharest. Knowing little or nothing about Roumania, I could not disguise from myself the fact that I was taking a leap in the dark; but curiosity and a thirst for adventure prompted me to a decision which I have never since regretted. Things were not then as they are now. Moldo-Wallachia, only eight years ago, was almost a *terra incognita* to the inhabitants of Western Europe. The reports of the country which I did receive were somewhat conflicting. "You will find Bucharest a gay, fashionable place," said one. "The so-called city of pleasure," remarked another, "is nothing but dulness personified." All were, however,

agreed as to the severity of the climate. The summers were intensely hot, while the winters were proportionately cold. There was cholera one season and diphtheria the next; typhus apparently holding its own all the year round. But the fevers engendered by the pestilential swamps which swarmed on every plain were the real scourge of the land. This, in fact, I afterwards discovered to my cost; and I much doubt whether any foreigner who has spent some weeks at Bucharest, has escaped without paying a penalty which is levied on old and young alike. The prospect, however, all things considered, was not so terribly alarming; though, speaking from experience, I would strongly advise all intending settlers in Roumania to pause and reflect well ere they took a step which might prove wellnigh irrevocable. For somehow, I know not why, people find it a very hard task to tear themselves away from Moldo-Wallachia. Much though they may dislike it, it still has for them a power of fascination simply unaccountable. And so well is this truth recognized, that the natives are fond of repeating a couplet which illustrates it most admirably :—

"Dambovitza, apa dulce,
Quine bea, nu mai se duce."

"Dambovitza, thou sweet water, Who drinks of

thee never leaves thee more." The Dambovitza, by the way, is a river flowing from the Carpathians, through Bucharest, to the Danube. I shall have occasion to refer to it again later on, for it plays a prominent part in the history and economy of the capital.

I left England in the month of August, 1870. The Franco-Prussian war was then fast becoming serious, and the utmost excitement prevailed. France was barred to me, so I took the steamer to Antwerp, and pushed on rapidly to Cologne. Belgium was alive with the clang of arms, and the troops who were making for the frontier in thousands interfered somewhat with the punctuality of the trains. From Cologne I proceeded to Vienna, avoiding the Rhine, and travelling instead through North Germany, Saxony, and Bohemia. Again the signs of the great conflict became painfully evident, for hosts of cavalry and infantry passed me all along the road to Berlin. It was not until the Austrian frontier was reached that I could overcome the depressing effect produced by the sight of so many men doomed to the hardships of a fierce campaign, perhaps to certain death. Little did I then dream that in the course of a few short years the storm of blood and fire which then rent Western Europe would be trans-

ferred to the East, and that the fair provinces which I was about to visit, would so soon be the scene of one of the most awful calamities which history has ever recorded. But I must be hurrying on. My route lay from Vienna to Basiasch, along the railway which runs through Buda-Pesth and the Banate of Temesvar. Here sturdy men, not delicate women and boys, as before, were bringing in the harvest, and the whole country wore a rich and cheerful appearance.

Basiasch is the station on the Danube where you take the Austrian steamer, which has floated down that river from the Hungarian capital. It is a bleak, stony spot, extremely uninteresting, except perhaps for the glimpse which it offers of what one has to expect further down. For here, for the first time, you see the real Wallachian peasant in all his rags and squalor, with unkempt locks and long, drooping moustache, the whole surmounted by the black Dacian cap, a spectacle never to be forgotten. A view of the uncouth monster made my heart almost sink within me, as I mentally exclaimed, "Civilisation, adieu!" Dreary visions of barren steppes and Wallachian brigands now began to haunt me. What if the entire country were like this, the inhabitants as savage and disgusting as the

people about me? My melancholy was, however, destined to be charmingly dispelled. Rounding a bend in the river a few hundred yards up, came the splendid steamer, a mass of life and gaiety and animation. An hour or two, and we were on board and off.

These Danube steamers, I may here observe, are models of luxury and comfort. Beautifully fitted up and kept with scrupulous care, they boast an admirable *cuisine*, and nothing can be more agreeable than a voyage up or down the river during the autumn months. In this case the operation was particularly pleasant, for the boat was filled with Moldo-Wallachians returning from their annual tour to Paris and the German baths. If the miserable appearance of the peasant had reduced me to the depths of despond, that of his lovely countrywomen had, I must confess, a diametrically opposite effect. Such brilliant, speaking eyes, such raven tresses, such dainty hands and feet were never seen anywhere else. The Roumanian women are famed for their beauty, and their whole existence is devoted to loving and being loved. Endowed with a ready wit and with a certain turn for humour, they are always amusing companions. Here, of course, they were at their best, full of health and spirits, and

eager to discuss what they had seen and heard. The captain of the steamer was the worthy conductor of such a craft and cargo. A first-rate sailor, prompt and gifted with much presence of mind, he was not blind to the charms of those around him. Handsome and accomplished, he was dressed within an inch of his life, and was evidently proud of the flutter which he caused as he paced the quarter-deck in his varnished boots and gloves of faultless lavender. Thrice happy they who were invited to join his little circle during the sunset hour, when iced champagne and delicious cigarettes lent a gentle stimulus to the conversation! And what a stir when any point of interest came in sight! Never have I found a more agreeable *cicerone*. The Iron Gates were of course the grand sight of the journey. They have been so often described, that I shall not attempt the task. Suffice it to say that they form the finest bit of river scenery in Europe. The mountains rising high on each side of the Danube, the rushing torrent, roaring and seething and boiling as it dashes on, the countless shoals, eddies, and whirlpools, with the bit of bright blue sky overhead, spotted with fleecy clouds, all combine to offer materials for a picture which is one of the most striking in the world. Compared with

this the Rhine sinks into hopeless insignificance. Even the Elbe, which boasts some charming nooks, is cast far into the shade by such a scene as this. Ever and anon we drifted past an island covered with rich verdure down to the water's edge. On one or two of these was to be found a dilapidated castle or an old-fashioned fortress, which had played its part in the Middle Ages, and was now doomed to decay. Occasionally a Turkish fez peered at us over the battlements. On the bank on our left we also noticed a solitary sentinel in the Austrian uniform, the successor of the ever-famous military colonists. It was not, however, until we reached Orsova that we really saw anything of our fellow-creatures. We had now gained the Wallachian frontier, and a change was soon to come o'er the spirit of our dream.

Hitherto our course had lain between steep mountains and jutting crags, overhung with bushes and trees; now a tamer landscape was to take the place of the old one. The Wallachian bank grew flat and low as a Dutch shore. Everywhere groups of willows lined the margin of the muddy stream, enlivened by flocks of storks and cranes, which wandered, solitary and unmolested, like fitful spectres, among them, picking their way through the dank

grass and dwarfish reeds as though they alone had ever inhabited the land. And here I may remark that, with the exception of a few places, such as Turnu Severin, Calafat, and Turnu Magurelle, the Wallachian side of the Danube down to Giurgiu presents anything but a lively appearance. It is, for the most part, a scene of emptiness and desolation. Lands uncultivated, pastures uncropped; scarcely a beast, never, almost, a man to be seen. This is indeed to be attributed to the fact that the country was for centuries exposed to the incursions of Turkish invaders, who burnt hamlet and town, ravaged the cornfields, and carried away flocks and herds. The peasantry preferred a safer abode, and sought in the hills of Craiova and in the neighbourhood of the Carpathians an asylum from the attacks of the foe. On the Turkish bank, on the other hand, the view is far more promising and picturesque. Village upon village looks down on the placid wave, and the prospect is everywhere most pleasing. The shore, again, both in Servia and Bulgaria is always higher; and it is remarkable that the southern side of the Danube is always more elevated than the northern. I must leave it to the geologist to explain this phenomenon. The rural districts on the Bulgarian bank seemed to be

admirably stocked with cattle, many of which, with the drovers, were to be observed either grazing on the undulating hills or quenching their thirst on the pebbly beach. There were also numbers of fishermen in pretty, but cumbersome, boats, rejoicing in sails of wonderful size and pattern. Altogether the panorama which I enjoyed during those two bright September days was one of the greatest treats of my life.

It was late in the afternoon when we touched Giurgiu, the little port at which we were to alight for Bucharest. Giurgiu then was not much to boast of. Surrounded by dismantled fortifications, and built on a most unromantic site, it was exactly like any other Moldo-Wallachian country town. Near the Danube itself were the barracks and a dozen houses and hotels of decent aspect, but beyond these was the usual average of dusty or muddy roads, as the case might be, lined with poor cottages and hovels, each exhaling a more unpleasant odour than the last, and dingy to the most pitiable degree. The place appeared to be abandoned to dogs and swine, and I thought as I looked around me that my prospects at Bucharest must be anything but satisfactory. Nor was the cheer to which I was treated, while waiting for the train,

calculated to inspire me with more joyous sentiments. The *schnitzel*, or cutlet, placed before me might have been a bit of rhinoceros' hide for aught I knew, as it resisted all my endeavours to dissect it. The landlord must have made quite a fortune out of that viand. Nor was the light Wallachian wine, which to my uninitiated palate seemed tinted vinegar, more prepossessing. I was once more rapidly approaching the verge of despair when the station-bell rang, and I found myself in the train, *en route* for Bucharest. From Giurgiu to Bucharest is a two hours' run, for the most part through a level country almost entirely abandoned to pasturage. The road possesses no points of interest, if we except Comana, a pretty wood about half-an-hour's journey from Bucharest, much sought after by pic-nic parties during the summer months. At the station young girls are generally to be seen in the warm weather, offering bunches of wild strawberries and flowers to the passengers for sale. They must reap a very fair harvest at this trade.

CHAPTER II.

"THE CITY OF PLEASURE."

It was evening when I arrived at Bucharest, and I learnt little from my drive through the dimly illuminated streets, but the fact that the pavement was the most execrable that had ever been invented. Such jolting and bumping must indeed be felt to be imagined. Nor is this to be wondered at when a nearer view is obtained. Except in the principal streets, which are properly kept and swept, the roads are either left to take care of themselves, or are so badly handled as to become simply intolerable. The Bulgarians, I believe, are responsible for this, as they are the regular gardeners and paviors in the country. In the summer, clouds of dust, not unmingled with horrible insects, sadly mar the enjoyment of the promenade. In the winter, however, the case is even worse, and it is sometimes impossible to cross the street on foot, as the water reaches to the necks of the horses. The mud and the slush must also be seen to be believed in, and no one stirs out of doors without high boots

or high galoshes. In fact, only a short time ago no Moldo-Wallachian of any respectability would condescend to walk. The only exercise taken was in the lumbering carriage, for the Roumanians are but indifferent horsemen, and are not, like the Hungarians and Turks, over partial to the saddle. It is from the dirt of its roads that Bucharest has acquired the nick-name of "*Boue qui reste*," bestowed upon it by strangers who have been accustomed to a better state of things.

Bucharest, in the national tongue *Bucuresci*, "the city of pleasure," is the capital of Wallachia. The old capital, in the days when the pashas made frequent inroads into the country, was Tirgovisti, a town situated to the north-west, and lying right under the Carpathian range. Being a city of recent date, Bucharest naturally boasts few or no antiquities; the round tower called "the Coltza," which is said to have been erected by the soldiers of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, after his disastrous defeat at Pultawa, being almost the sole object of interest. The position of the town is somewhat peculiar, for though placed in the midst of a plain of broad expanse, it is surrounded on nearly every side by low hills, which, while they screen it pleasantly in winter from the blasts which sweep

down upon it from the frozen steppes of Russia and from the cold Black Sea, render it a perfect oven in the months of July and August, when the temperature is almost tropical. To see Bucharest as it should be seen, the spectator should climb one of the hills on the south side of the city, and look carefully into it from the top. The view is then most charming, for the metal plates which cover the domes of the two hundred churches which it contains, reflecting the dazzling rays of the brilliant sun, produce an effect which may well be described as splendid. In the month of May, when the lovely gardens with which the town abounds are bedecked with verdant foliage and graceful flowers, the sight is unusually pleasing. A nearer acquaintance proves, however, somewhat disappointing. Lines upon lines of dirty streets fringed with shabby houses, cottages, and hovels, relieved only here and there by the mansion of some great boyard, do much towards removing the favourable impression already formed. It is not therefore until the centre of the town is reached, that the traveller perceives anything which reminds him of the home he has left. Here is the Podu Mogosoi, the principal street of the city, and the one in which the best shops are to be found. In it are the large hotels,

which have of late years been rising in such profusion, and which are so well and so luxuriously managed. The palace, the residence of the princely family, lies about half-way down this street. The appearance of this building is by no means striking, though the interior atones for many deficiencies. The reception-rooms are large and exquisitely furnished, and Prince Charles has devoted much time and attention to the decoration of his abode. Opposite the grand entrance is a little guard-house, always the scene of much red-tape commotion, as the soldiers appear to be incessantly turning out to perform some ceremony. Not far from the palace is the theatre, a fine edifice, capable of accommodating a very large house. It is one of the most comfortable in Europe, and is consecrated, according to the season, to the opera, the French stage, and the Carnival *bals masqués*. The Prince has of course his own box, and the rest of the rank and fashion regularly patronise the performances. The theatre is intimately bound up with the lives of the Moldo-Wallachians. But this is a subject to which I shall give due consideration in another place. Many of the public buildings, including the Prefecture of Police, lie in the Podu Mogosoi, which is, as I have already said, the haunt of the

flâneur. At right angles, however, to the Podu Mogosoi runs a formidable rival in the shape of the Grand Boulevard. This fine piece of ground contains the University and the Museum, which last possesses a library of 27,000 volumes. Not far away, and parallel to the Boulevard, is the Strada Lipscanii, or Leipzig-street, so called because many of the shop-keepers came from the German town.

At the northern extremity of Bucharest, and on the highroad leading to Ploesti, is the *Chaussée*, the Rotten Row of the capital. This is the grand promenade, and from it the Carpathians, some eighty miles distant, may be discerned on a clear day. The *Chaussée* is thronged, both in summer and winter, with splendid equipages, for the Roumanian boyards are not sparing in their expenditure, and even many of the tradespeople have set up their carriages too. Late on a fine evening in June the *Chaussée* is lined, two or three rows deep, with vehicles of every description, from the well-appointed four-in-hand drag down to the modest two-horse cab. The cabs, I may here remark, are to be had at the cheap rate of two francs an hour, and as the inhabitants are as passionately fond of driving as the Viennese themselves, they are always in great demand. And the *toilettes* must be seen to

be believed in. Such a display of velvets and satins and lace as is to be met with nowhere else. Now we pass a pair of thoroughbred Hungarian bays, for which a most extravagant price has been paid; now a superb Arab, ridden by some Moldavian belle, bursts upon our view. Here, too, is often to be noticed the dark-blue carriage tenanted by Prince Charles and Princess Elizabeth, and easily recognisable through the white plumes of the *chasseur*. The Prince is dark and handsome, and remarkable for his quiet, dignified demeanour. The Princess, fair and blushing, has a smile for every salutation; and much beloved is she by all who know her for her amiable character, for she is a true woman. Formerly the little Princess Marie, their only child, loved to drive in her own travelling carriage, the postilions in the national costume. But she died a few years since, and now the *Chaussée* knows her no more. In the winter months this *rendezvous* is equally well patronised, but we have now elegant sledges, gorgeous with bells and nets and handsome trappings. Opening on the *Chaussée* are several splendid gardens, well provided with summer-houses and shady nooks, which must often have heard the old, old story of love. But the unromantic are also well cared for, and the supper-rooms are always

fairly filled. There is a park in the interior of the town, which is for the most part frequented by the poorer folk. This is the Cismejiu. It contains a stagnant lake, the sole duty of which seems to be to poison the neighbouring quarter, and some very fine trees. The lake, by the way, does come in usefully in winter, when it is the resort of the skaters, whose evolutions are always watched with interest by a large and gaping crowd. There are a few public gardens, but these are of small size. Some of the more extensive churchyards also have their share of patrons. That of Saint George, for instance, at the end of the Strada Lipscanii, is always thronged to excess on Sundays, Thursdays, and Saints' days, the inhabitants of that neighbourhood rarely indulging in a cab.

I have said that there are two hundred churches in Bucharest. Perhaps I exaggerate; but the number is certainly very considerable. Each of these churches stands in its own churchyard, which contains a few graves, while the houses of the priests are ranged around. These are generally a few cottages adjoining one another, and occupied by the priests, their wives and families. Some of the older churchyards are regular fortresses, their walls being high and of immense thickness, and the doors

through which entrance is obtained being also remarkably strong, and protected by bars of iron. In the good old times, when the town was liable to attack, the inhabitants whose homes were grouped around the churches, were accustomed to remove thither on the first alarm. The gates were then closed, and they were able to stand a desultory siege. As for the churches themselves, they present a somewhat gaudy appearance, their roofs and domes being covered with the metal plates to which I have already referred. Their exteriors are also adorned with painted effigies of saints and other holy men, the paintings being in the Byzantine school of art. The churches are, as a rule, rather small. They are not divided into aisles or chancels, and they are not pewed. Entering by the western door, one advances into a lofty hall. At the other end is the altar, which is often richly embellished and of extreme beauty. Pictures, also of the Byzantine type, conceal the nakedness of the walls. There are no galleries, and but few seats, the women usually contenting themselves with sitting, or rather crouching, on the low stone shelves which run round the sacred edifice. For in this Church, be it understood, the congregation always stands. The services are not peculiarly impressive, and I must

own that I was much disappointed. They are chanted in a droning lazy voice by the priests, in the same manner as those of the Jews and Mahomedans. No instrumental music is allowed, and the voices of the choristers strike harshly, and often with something of dissonance, on the ear. The reliques of the saints—and their name is legion here—are scrupulously guarded in the churches, and the worship of many of the inhabitants appears to be confined to their adoration and to that of the pictures and the grand crucifix.

There are two Roman Catholic churches at Bucharest, and a convent founded, curiously enough, by some English ladies, and called to this day *Le Couvent des Dames Anglaises*. The Romish services in this city are far more gorgeous than they are in our own country. This may perhaps be attributed to a prudent deference to Oriental taste. The use of trumpets and a full band may be calculated to produce a certain impression, but it must be confessed that the general effect is somewhat marred by the fact that each instrument seems determined to go its own way, quite independently of the rest. Prince Charles of Hohenzollern, being a Papist, sometimes performs his devotions at these churches, kneeling in front of the altar; while his aides-de-camp, who

belong to the Greek Church, eye-glass in eye, stare carelessly around them, and try to look as if they thought themselves anywhere but in a place of worship. Sermons are preached here both in German and French, for the benefit of the different colonists. The German Protestants have a Lutheran church of imposing appearance, which is regularly frequented by Princess Elizabeth, who is a daughter of the House of Wied. Near it stands the Calvinist church, built for the Szekler population. It is a far less pretentious affair. There are also several synagogues, as there are a number of Jews in the town. Of these two are remarkably large: one has the Spanish ritual, followed by the French, Italian, and Spanish Jews; the other the German, observed by Germans and Poles. The Roman Catholics at Bucharest naturally adhere to the new style of reckoning time; but the German Protestants have adopted the old style, thus keeping feast and fast on precisely the same days as the Greeks. This is a wise measure, from a purely commercial point of view, as they would probably be the losers were they to close their places of business on both sets of days.

An account of Bucharest would be incomplete without a notice of the Dambovitza, which, rising

in the Carpathians, flows through the city and supplies it with water. This is a narrow stream, very shallow during the summer months, indeed not three feet deep in some spots at this season of the year. In the winter it is almost continually frozen over, and the ice must be broken daily to enable the water-carriers to replenish their *saca*, or barrel. This barrel, mounted upon wheels, is drawn about from morning to night by a single horse, which is not seldom both blind and lame. The water is none of the cleanest, and must undergo a filtering process ere it can be rendered suitable even for washing purposes; yet it is drunk in its natural state by glassfuls at a time, and the inhabitants profess to prefer it to any other fluid, and are fond of repeating their favourite quotation, "*Dambovitza, apa dulce*," and of recording instances of foreigners who, having tasted of the river and quitted Bucharest, have been only too glad to return to it and to lay their bones by its grassy margin.

The markets are not much to boast of. The meat and vegetable markets are situated close to the Dambovitza, and are very untidy and dirty. Nearer to the centre of the town is the market, where ordinary articles of consumption are to be procured. Here the pastry-cook and the vendors of

tea and *mamaliga* display their dainty wares to the delectation of the poorer population.

Cafés teem in Bucharest, each section of the inhabitants being especially provided for. They are in much request, not only because they serve the purpose of clubs, but because, owing to the alternate excessive heat and cold, it is impossible to be out of doors during a considerable portion of the day. The cafés are well fitted-up with billiard-tables—they play the cannon game here—with chess and draught boards, dominoes, and cards. Nor are newspapers lacking to those who delight in political arguments. These are liberally supplied with local and foreign prints; the whole being, as a rule, carefully and wisely selected. To many of the cafés a garden is attached, and these are much frequented in the summer evenings, when the inhabitants assemble to quaff the cooling beer, and drink in at the same time the music of the *laoutari*, or gipsy minstrels, who are in great request all through Roumania. There are besides separate gardens, such as that kept by Hrashka, a Hungarian, where the entertainments are of an elaborate description. The Hrashka Garden is adorned with numerous lamps, and has, besides the *laoutari*, a regimental band. It also possesses

a commodious supper-room, and *artistes* from foreign lands occasionally vary the performances with amusements of a more or less equivocal character. Songs, which would not be tolerated by any respectable audience are, I grieve to say, much relished here, and are greeted with plaudits innumerable and with repeated *encores*. This is what Paris has done for the Moldo-Wallachian student.

There is a tramway company at Bucharest, and the streets are now fairly illuminated with gas, at least in the more fashionable quarters. Formerly oil-lamps were alone in use; but improvements are the order of the day. The *mahalas*, or suburbs, which are full of waste patches of ground and poisonous swamps, still require to be taken in hand; but, with this exception, progress is everywhere apparent.

In conclusion, it may be interesting to know that Bucharest possesses 25,000 houses and 244,000 inhabitants. It is a large town, and, owing to the number of gardens and pieces of unoccupied land, fills more space than would naturally be expected. The health of the people is now better looked after than was formerly the case, and in time the appearance of the city will doubtless change for the better.

CHAPTER III.

SOCIETY.

THE Roumanians are either eminently patrician or eminently plebeian; the middle-class, in the towns at least, being composed almost entirely of foreigners. The Moldo-Wallachian gentleman—or nobleman, if you prefer the title—is called a boyard. Formerly the title was the lawful property of every man of war; now it is almost exclusively applied to the man of peace, the *fainéant*. Those who have been reigning Princes either of Wallachia or Moldavia retain the title of Prince, which their children also enjoy by courtesy, for they have properly no right to it. There are a great many princes at Bucharest. It would be a mistake to suppose that the Roumanian aristocracy is composed entirely, or in great part, of native families, for the reverse is strictly the case. The rule of the Phanariote hospodars, to which I shall have occasion to refer in its proper place, introduced into the country a number of Greek *parvenus*, who gradually swamped the old boyards, and usurped their privileges and

possessions. Greek was the language spoken at the Court until about thirty years since, when a Russian occupation of the capital rendered French the fashionable tongue. It must not, however, be concluded that the representatives of the Phanar are, as they pretend to be, the inheritors of the Byzantine Empire. In former days, when a Greek child was born, the bystanders were wont to pray that he might one day become, as others had before him, "a pastry-cook, a seller of lemonade, and a Prince of Wallachia." The dregs of the population, who were thus suddenly raised to eminence, stole from the grand houses of the Later Empire family names for themselves, and swaggered in their borrowed plumes to their own delight and that of their friends and sycophants. The Cantacuzènes are thus not Cantacuzènes at all. Their real name is Magoureano. It would be very interesting, were it really true, to know that there are several Palæologi in the principalities. The Mavrocordatos and Maurojenis came from Miconi, in the Archipelago; the great house of Ghika is of Albanian origin. The Ypsilantis and the Mourosis are from Trebizond; the Soutzos are Bulgarians; the Rosettis, Genoese; the Caradjas, Ragusans; and so I might run on, *ad infinitum*. On the other hand, the Golescos, the Bratianos, and the

Gradistianos are of pure Roumanian blood. All names terminating in *esco* and *ano* may be assumed, *cæteris paribus*, to be plain, unvarnished affairs. The Greek and foreign origin of the Roumanian boyards affords a rare key to their character and mode of life. Once every nobleman was a hero; now high birth is synonymous with effeminacy, profligacy, and indolence. Until very lately the boyard could do nothing for himself. He was helped into his carriage like a dummy; when he moved about his house, there was a servant on each side of him to support his trembling footsteps; his glass was filled as he drank, his meat chopped up into the smallest morsels, all ready for consumption. No one could have led a more negative existence. Now, however, matters have begun to improve, but there is still much room for a change for the better. The Roumanian gentleman is the gayest of the gay. His life is made up of a continual round of visits, flirtation, and play. Cards are much in vogue at Bucharest, and at some houses there is a reception every evening, large sums being often lost and won. I recollect a duel which took place whilst I was at Bucharest, the cause being a quarrel over cards. Two young men, a civilian and an officer, went one night to the house of a friend, and the former soon

sat down with his host over a game of *baccarat*. The civilian lost heavily that night, and still more so on the following day; the total amounting, I believe, to two or three thousand napoleons. But the officer, who, like the proverbial looker-on, had seen most of the game, quietly informed his unlucky companion that he had observed his host's wife standing behind his chair and signalling occasionally to her husband. This intelligence led to a row and to a duel between the host and the officer, which resulted in the wounding of the former, who was for some time in a very precarious condition. The officer appeared the same evening at the opera, and went the round of the boxes to receive the congratulations of the fair sex. Men are often completely ruined at cards, and many of the mortgages on the country estates owe their existence to the proprietors' passion for gambling. Even in the cafés, officers may often be seen early in the morning over cards and billiards; for few seem to know how worthily to employ their leisure. The boyard's love of cards is only equalled by his thirst for intrigue. Marriage is not a particularly binding tie in this country. The atrocious practice of the Greek Church, which allows three divorces, is in a great measure the cause of this. When a man and

woman begin life together, with the consciousness that they may be separated, for no special reason, save the whim of one or the other, by the end of the year, it is not surprising that they should not attach over much importance to their relations to each other. A simple demand, not based on any moral, or immoral, reason or proof, is sufficient, in many cases, to obtain a divorce. A girl who had been married a fortnight once took it into her head that she was, after all, happier in her father's house. She had nothing to say against the bridegroom, who was a most worthy young man; but there was the fancy. Will it be believed that the pair were divorced, and that the husband of two weeks had to return all his bride's dowry, together with that portion of her money which had already been spent? Another day a couple who had been married twenty years, and had, wonderful to relate, lived esteemed and respected by all, announced that they were contemplating separation. The gentleman had conceived a passion for a youthful belle, who had already got rid of two husbands, and had had, so scandal said, at least twenty more: while the lady had also become amorous of a boy scarcely out of his teens. In vain did friends protest, supplicate, and implore. All intervention was useless,

and the desired changes were made. Once a year, however, the two couples travelled together to visit the offspring of the first combination, who were being educated at a German school. I once heard, *mirabile dictu*, that a venerable couple fast approaching their fourteenth lustre, had nearly perpetrated a separation, because the wife wished to migrate to Paris, while the husband preferred the home to which he had been so long attached. The separation was afterwards effected *de facto*, though happily, for respectability's sake, not *de jure*. Such was the conduct of a pair who had dwelt together in the closest of unions for more than half a century, and who could in this cold-blooded fashion anticipate the hand of Death. And yet they were, in every other respect, much to be admired. I may add to this a little tale as it was told to me, with the simple proviso that every word of it is true. It will afford a very apt illustration of the manners of the age.

A young lady, barely twenty-one, stood before the hymeneal altar by the side of her third husband—the other two had *not* gone the way of all flesh. Thereupon the bishop who had just united the two turtle-doves, thinking, good man, that he might improve the occasion, took upon him to hint

that the bride had better content herself for once, as this was her last chance. "Not so," replied the unblushing and undaunted fair one, "I have still another, for was not my first husband my cousin, and was not our marriage, therefore, illegal?" It is scarcely a matter for wonder that marriages have not, as a rule, turned out very prosperously, seeing that they are arranged after so eccentric a method. When a girl arrives at a marriageable age, her sire fixes upon her a *dot* or dowry, the fame of which is diligently spread abroad by the friends of the family in question, as well as by the professional match-makers. This dowry must prove, in most cases, a severe and unpleasant drain upon the paternal finances, as the daughter's happiness and worldly success depend in a great measure upon its magnitude. Thus a man blessed with three female olive-branches, will not seldom bestow upon them three-quarters of his fortune, and live contentedly on the remaining quarter. If he have sons, so much the worse for them; they must satisfy their glowing ambition with what they can get, and pay their court in return to damsels possessed of a goodly heritage. Eligible youths present themselves as suitors for the hand of the fair candidate for Hymen's rites, and a list of their names and

qualifications, if any, is handed to the lady, who makes her selection accordingly. Some of these ardent lovers may be personally unknown to her, nay, may even never have beheld those peerless charms by which they are so deeply smitten, yet she may choose from one of them notwithstanding. Often at Bucharest and at Jassy a young girl sees at the altar, for the first time, the man who is to be her companion through life. This is a true bill. Some years ago a young lady, accompanied by her family and friends, went to church to be married. The party awaited the arrival of the *fiancé*, but he never turned up. On inquiring at the house, it was found that he had gone out; where he was no one knew. The bridal train was still waiting patiently, when a cousin suggested that the brother of the intended might do as well. So again a messenger was despatched, this time in search of the brother, who, accepting the offer, was speedily tied up instead. "It is said," once remarked a boyard to M. Saint-Marc Girardin, "that some wise people want to introduce divorce into your laws. They should come amongst us for a time, and observe the curious results of this usage. What say you to children who have their mother in one family, their father in another, and who,

ignorant on which to bestow their respect and their love, possess not a link of connection, not a single bond of union? What say you too to women who at a *soirée* meet their two or three former husbands, lean on the arm of a fourth, and blush at the compliments of a fifth? The sentiment of promiscuity, and the liberty which these customs offer, are a standing menace to society." And again, "Our manners are a little the manners, or rather the vices, of all the peoples who have governed or protected us. We have borrowed from the Russians their libertinage, from the Greeks their lack of honesty, from the Phanariote princes their mixture of baseness and vanity, from the Turks their indolence and love of ease. The Poles have taught us divorce, and have given us that swarm of Jews of low origin which you see everywhere in our streets. Such are our morals!"

The ladies pass their time in lounging on the sofa, in the business of self-adornment, and in driving in the *Chaussée*. They are, as a rule, very pretty, and have a style about them which is not often to be seen elsewhere. Elegant, clever, good linguists, they make very pleasant society, and, if better looked after by the men, would be real prizes. Some years since they were still only

women of the harem, and of a harem destitute of eunuchs. Seated all day cross-legged on a divan, chewing sweetmeats and dressing and undressing themselves, they studied nothing but cosmetics and the *raffinements* of a misplaced coquetry. Their nails were painted red, their eyebrows stained black, their cheeks bedaubed with paint, their tresses strewn with gold coins, their necks brilliant with jewels, and their bodices adorned with all the diamonds handed down in the family from age to age. Now, however, this *régime* is changed, and they dress, as a rule, splendidly, though in good taste. But they still paint, and many of them are partial to the perfumed aroma of the delicate cigarette. Their manners, with those of the men, are exquisite, and a most scrupulous, though easy, politeness is observed and never relaxed. Equivocal as are often the relations existing between ladies and gentlemen in society, not a look, not a gesture would ever lead a stranger to suppose that they were anything but the merest acquaintance. No man ever presumes in the slightest degree on his *bonnes fortunes*. There is no swagger: everything is quiet and gentlemanly. One might often imagine oneself, were it not for the costumes, and other surroundings, suddenly transported back to a French

salon in the time of Louis XIV. There are the same *grands airs*, the same stately *étiquette*, the same vanity and frivolity. This is, perhaps, partly to be attributed to duelling, a practice to which the Roumanian aristocracy is much addicted. To tread accidentally on a dress at a ball is to put your life in mortal jeopardy. Should you be so unfortunate as to let your partner fall, you had better make your will at once, unless you are a crack shot. At a grand ball given one night at a certain hotel, a young man was entrusted with the management of the cotillon in the place of the host, who was eighty years of age. In the middle of the dance a friend came up and asked him to introduce a particular figure. He replied that he would do so if he could, but it turned out that he could not. At the conclusion of the cotillon, the friend returned, and begged to know why he had omitted the figure. Explanation was fruitless; insults were interchanged; and they fought next day. I shall wind up this subject of duelling with an account of a duel, as I heard it through an English general, who is also a Turkish pasha. During the Austrian occupation of 1853, a German army doctor and a Wallachian officer somehow fell foul of each other, and determined to fight it out. The duel came off

in the Podu Mogosoi. Sabres were the arms selected, but neither knew how to use them. The battle was ludicrous in the extreme. Advancing towards his foe, the Austrian, with cries of "Verdammter Kerl!" and other ornate phrases, drove him, by sheer slashing and hammering, to the opposite wall. Then the Wallach, also taking heart, with his war-cry, slashed and hammered in return. But nothing came of it. Both were tired; both black and blue; the sabres of both had been converted into saws, so jagged were they, but no blood had been shed. In vain did the seconds call upon their friends; in vain was each regaled at intervals with a glass of *raku*. The blood would not flow. At length, becoming desperate, the Austrian struck a furious blow at the enemy; the sabre, now a saw, caught his neck and tore therefrom a tiny piece of skin; and so ended one of the most extraordinary duels that have ever been recorded.

There is still some jealousy existing between the Wallachians and the Moldavians, for Bucharest has prospered, through the union, to the ruin of Jassy. The Moldavian senators and deputies must visit the capital at stated seasons; but they still hold themselves rather aloof from one another, and watch each other with eyes of suspicion. Every one knows how

discontented the Moldavians have been all through the Russo-Turkish war.

The Prince and Princess of Roumania, Prince Charles of Hohenzollern, and Princess Elizabeth of Wied, did not, until lately, move much in Wallachian society. When he did go out the Prince was usually followed like a dog by the master of the house, who was always most obsequious. But, as a rule, the pair were vastly unpopular. Their appearance and manner were severely criticised by the *connoisseurs* of Bucharest, and the Princess's absence of style was often severely commented on. The stiff *étiquette* borrowed from the Prussian Court gave grievous offence, and the representatives of former reigning houses asked why they were to be snubbed by people who were neither grander nor better than themselves. Complaints were often loud and deep, and several times there have been rumours of abdication. The princely pair have, however, somehow contrived to ingratiate themselves to a certain extent in the affections of their subjects. Whatever the faults of the Prince, it is certain that the Princess is amiability itself. A friend of mine at Bucharest, writing to me the other day, said that she ought to be called Saint Elizabeth.

The Wallachian boyard lives in great style, and

with much display. His house is large and commodious, and splendidly furnished, from sixteen to twenty reception-rooms sometimes opening into one another. He has a host of servants and satellites attached to his mansion, two or three men-cooks, the same number of coachmen—valets, footmen and maids in battalions. These, sometimes to the amount of thirty or forty, all inhabit his house and court-yard, and in many cases the wives and children dwell with them. But the master is good-natured and generous, and makes no objection to a system which would exasperate any one else. He keeps open house, and has a dinner prepared for any friends who may present themselves. It is on record that as many as forty guests have sat down to a table to which none had been previously invited. This would test pretty severely the resources of most establishments, but it affects him not. His *cuisine* is of the most *recherché* order; in fact, a combination of whatever is most excellent in others. Here you have the best of everything, a mingling of the Eastern and Western modes that is most piquant. He has lived over and over again at the best hotels in every corner of Europe, and his taste and experience are simply perfect. His horses are magnificent, and his stables probably contain some

English thoroughbreds. He has his own particular carriages and his wife hers, quite distinct—a very convenient arrangement, it may be remarked, whereby much trouble and annoyance are avoided; for, in this country, woman certainly is in the fullest enjoyment of her rights and privileges, and, as is but natural, seems determined to make the most of them. She has her own horses and servants, her own suite of apartments, and is thorough mistress of herself all the livelong day. She may expend a fortune upon her *toilette*, indulge in any amount of flirtation, and if she grows weary of her long-suffering husband, she is free to wed another whenever she may fancy so doing.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MIDDLE CLASS.

THE middle class in the towns is composed, as I have already said, almost exclusively of the foreign element, of French and Germans and Jews—Polish, Austrian, and Spanish. But there is also a small proportion of the native population which may come under this head, and it is with this, as in duty bound, that I shall deal first. The general run of the doctors, lawyers, officers of the line, and civil servants belong to this class. Of the two former professions only a very small average may be ranked with the boyards, and these are for the most part persons who have arrived from abroad, and whose position and talents have at once secured for them a high place in the estimation of their fellow-citizens. Neither the medical men nor the lawyers can, as a rule, pretend to much distinction. Some of them have been brought up at home, others in France and Germany. A few of them make tolerable incomes, but the mass lead a struggling and shabby existence. The majority of the officers of the line are not much

to boast of. They perform the ordinary routine of service, and then repair to the café, where they take their meals and pass their leisure time. Not over well paid, they just contrive to jog along without getting into debt. The civil servants are usually men of much the same stamp. They are divided into various departments; but the Post-office and the Telegraph officials are the most numerous class. The younger men are not much considered, and the common people have bestowed on them the nick-name of *Cinces*, or Fivers, because they are currently believed to be in receipt of exactly five napoleons per month. They are accused, with what truth I know not, of sacrificing everything to appearance, and are said often to dispense with their meagre dinners, in order to have a little spare cash to pay for their seat at the play. One fine day, while I was at Bucharest, the Government suddenly ordered that they should all turn out in uniform, and soon the *Cinces* were to be seen swaggering about the streets in all the bravery of lace and swords, much to the disgust of their military *confrères*, who had hitherto had all the admiration to themselves. Poor fellows! Sadly do they sometimes complain of the penury to which they are reduced; but how their salaries are to be raised I know not, as Roumania is, *par*

excellence, the land of officialism, and, small country that it is, possesses more civil servants than either France or Prussia. The people naturally grudge the expense, for they are not particularly wealthy; hence their sneers at the unfortunate Fivers. But I believe that both officers and civilians are good fellows enough. They pull very well together, and are altogether most friendly. This is the class which supports the Republican party.

The French are, of all the colonists, by far the most popular; for France is the land which, of all others, the Roumanian most admires. And this, I may say, is more or less the case throughout the East. The Frenchman is always liked, while the German is usually detested in equal proportion. The great majority of the best shops are kept by French and Germans, some of whom are also doctors, engineers, and bankers. Most of them are, however, of Jewish origin. The Jews indeed form the great commercial class in this country. The Jewish question is a very vexed one; but there are of course, as we all know, good Jews, bad Jews, indifferent, and uninteresting Jews. The Jews are the bankers of the country, the artisans also, and were till recently almost the sole tobacco and spirit vendors. The Jews are rather oppressed

in Roumania. Persecutions on a small scale have sometimes arisen, though their execution has been limited to a few amateurs, and has not spread to the mass of the soldiery or people. The Greek priests are fond of exciting their flocks against the Jews, and at the time of the Passover reports are often current that Christian children have been kidnapped and their blood used in the ceremonies at the synagogues. For these rumours there is, it is needless to say, absolutely no foundation in fact. On the contrary, the Jews are the most harmless of the population, and lead peaceful, tranquil lives, doing a vast amount of good in many cases. What Roumania would become without this element I cannot pretend to say. The real grudge against the Jews arises from the circumstance that a good many of the boyards' estates are mortgaged to them, and, but for a law which does not allow Jews to hold land in Moldo-Wallachia, would long since have fallen into their possession. In fact, I cannot help thinking that jealousy has more to do with the Jewish question than religion or anything else. The boyards cannot forget that they owe enormous sums of money to the Jews, and the smaller folk find that their lazy habits will not enable them to hold their own against the industry and economy of

the Israelite. Naturally the priests take a pleasure in raising the cry; but unfortunately the priests are not as much respected here as they are in some more favoured lands. If an English colony, no smaller than the present Jewish one, were planted in the country, a like spirit of dissatisfaction would be soon afloat. The deadly foes of the Jews delight, it is true, in reviving the bugbear of the Middle Ages; but it is not by the priests that the train is originally laid—though these, in their fanaticism, offer themselves as willing instruments—not by the representatives of religion and piety, but rather by men connected with the extreme patriotic party, by men whose minds would be uninfluenced by considerations, in their opinion, so puerile. The fact that the Jews remain a separate people, and do not intermarry or form any connection with the native population, may of course prevent an increase of cordiality and conduce more or less to the maintenance of their unpopularity; but the Roumanians are jealous of forming alliances with other foreigners as well, and of admitting them to free social intercourse with themselves. An attack was made some time ago on the Prussian colonists at Bucharest, who were banqueting under the auspices of their consul in one of the great public halls of the city;

the windows were smashed in and a free fight ensued. Other examples might be enumerated.

There are besides these Armenians and Greeks. I have already explained how the Greek element was introduced into the country. The Armenians in Wallachia came from Turkey; the Moldavian Armenians arrived directly from Armenia proper in several detachments in the eleventh, fourteenth, fifteenth, and seventeenth centuries, escaping from the persecutions of the Persians. The Wallachian Armenians speak Turkish among themselves; the Moldavian, Armenian. As for the younger generation, they only know Roumanian well. They almost all belong to the commercial class, but some are farmers.

Bucharest is the tradesman's paradise. Whose is yonder chariot with the coronet blazoned on its brilliantly varnished panels, coachman and groom decked out in gilded liveries? Those nodding plumes, those prancing steeds—whose are they? This handsome dame, this charming pair of vestals decked out in the last glories fresh from Paris—whose hearth do they light up with their beaming smiles? These are the family, these the steeds, these the menials of that grocer whose shop-door is embellished with a signboard portrait of that famous

Emperor Trajan, the star of whose memory will never pale so long as signboards survive. It is pleasant to note how this pretty custom has been retained. This shop flourishes beneath the sign of the White Cat; over this the Yellow Bear presides; yon glowing Angel guards this chemist's threshold. Everyone, as I have said, who has any pretension to rank enjoys the title of prince, and it is amusing to notice how the *petits boyards* and the tradespeople copy their betters when they too go abroad. One day at Vienna, I was told that there was a great Wallachian prince staying at my hotel. On enquiry I discovered that he was a prosperous bootmaker. There is always any amount of show, but not always the substance with the shadow thereof.

CHAPTER V.

THE COMMON HERD.

In every country the most interesting study is that of the lower classes, who form the real strength and backbone of the whole community. Civilization, that destroyer of old habits, associations, and costume, touches them last of all. Long after the towns have yielded to the pressure of the age, we find in remote country districts a perfect picture of the past. The peasant deserves our respect, for he lives as our ancestors lived and shows us what they have been. In Roumania, a land hitherto but little affected by the engineering spirit of the Nineteenth Century, the great proportion of the common people have remained *in statu quo*, and their primitive manners and curious customs may be studied with advantage, not only by the antiquary, but also by the man of the world. I have shown in the two preceding chapters that the foreign element forms a considerable factor in the constitution of the aristocracy and the middle class. With the peasantry, however, this is not the case. Here we have the

Roumanian *pur et simple*, with no varnish of outside polish upon him. He is the representative of the manhood of the country, the inheritor of the glorious traditions of the dim past. He has bowed under the yoke of successive generations of tyrants and spoilers; but his heart is brave and cheery as ever, and he is ready as ever to forget and forgive. The Roumanian peasantry is, like its so-called Italian forefathers, almost exclusively military and agricultural; for in the larger towns, Bucharest for example, the servants are usually either Gipsies or Szeklers of Transylvania. The Roumanian peasant is generally a well-knit, hardy man, with long hair and drooping moustache, and an aquiline nose, which strongly reminds the stranger of certain statues of the best Roman type. He is good-tempered and witty, speaks his language with wonderful purity and correctness, and is perfectly satisfied so long as his oxen thrive and his favourite tobacco-box can be replenished. The misery and wretchedness of the past, instead of brutalising his character, have lent a softness, not unmingled with a certain spice of irony, to his glance. He is clever and intelligent, and the only hatred which he still nourishes is directed against the *Mouscal*, as he terms the Muscovite. As for the boyard, who had

so long oppressed him, he simply regards him with mocking contempt. The word *Ciocoï*, or crouching dogs, applied to the Phanariote grandees, was his own invention.

Formerly the Roumanian peasantry was noted for its hospitality; but it has suffered so cruelly from the visits of the stranger that it has naturally become a little reserved, and will not now repose implicit confidence in every traveller. In Transylvania, however, which has been more or less exempt from the scourge of war, the Roumanian peasant appears in his best light. M. de Gérando, climbing the mountain of Zalathna, found there touching marks of attention to the wants of the solitary wayfarer. "I saw," he says, "on the road, attached to a tree, a kind of wooden niche. In front were two vases; behind I perceived a Madonna roughly carved. The place was deserted. No one passed that way. One of the jars was filled with water, the other already empty. Who had placed them there? I knew not. For whom had they been filled? For me if I needed them. Traversing these mountains on horseback, I often came upon them. One day, in less than two hours, I counted eleven jars placed under the trees by unknown hands, with which I might have quenched

my thirst. Every morning the Wallachians go and fill them for the traveller who will pass during the day, and who may even be a foe." As it is, even in Moldo-Wallachia the door of the peasant's cottage is always open to him who requires assistance.

The *toilette* of the Roumanian peasant is decidedly peculiar, and is especially interesting because it is said that it has not changed since the time of Trajan, this fact being proved by a reference to the costumes of the Dacian prisoners represented on the triumphal column. He wears a shirt or tunic of thick linen, with trousers or drawers of the same material; the shirt being worn over the trousers and bound round the waist by a large leather girdle, in which are stuck knife and tobacco-pouch, and other necessary articles. His feet are tied with sandals, called *opinci*, consisting of a piece of skin cut in the shape of the foot, and fastened with a number of strips of rag, which pass over the instep, covering the ankles and the lower part of the leg. In the winter an embroidered waistcoat of sheepskin is added to this attire. Summer and winter, however, the peasant never leaves home without his *guba*, or great-coat of sheepskin. In the warm weather the hairy side is turned out for coolness;

but in the cold it is turned in for warmth. A high Dacian cap named the *cuciula*, usually of black wool, completes his attire. Nor should I forget to mention that during the prevalence of snow and slush, the peasant adds to his wardrobe a pair of high, thickly-greased boots, which last are also worn by the weaker sex under similar circumstances.

The costume of the women is extremely nice and elegant. They wear a linen chemisette, embroidered over the bosom and at the wrists with red and blue wool and beads. Round their waists comes a broad coloured girdle, and their petticoats are short and white. Sometimes they go barefoot; but their usual *chaussure* is the *opinci*. On high days and holidays, however, they indulge in boots of red or blue leather, like the Hungarians, or coquettish slippers, carrying them under their arms to the fair or *rendezvous*, and then putting them on until they return home. The married women roll around their heads a white kerchief, the ends of which hang down behind. The girls, on the other hand, wear their hair in a long braid, which floats down on the back. Their heads are never covered. On festal occasions they place coins in their tresses, and wear round their necks a brilliant necklace containing

their dowry in *lira* pieces. Sometimes as much as two hundred pounds' worth of coins is strung in this manner about their persons; and it says something for the honour and chivalry of the men, that they can go about thus, at crowded assemblies and in secluded bye-paths, without incurring the slightest risk. The women are, as a rule, extremely handsome. Their dark, lustrous eyes, their raven locks, descending in plaits on the whitest of shoulders, their light, but rounded, figures, their tiny, neatly-formed hands and feet, would be coveted by many a belle in the luxurious *salons* of the West. They have a certain repugnance to holding themselves in a stooping position, and when they carry a burden they usually place it on their heads. They never use a truck, but take all their vegetables to market in two panniers attached to a kind of frame which rests on their shoulders. "The costume of the women," says Lancelot, "awakens the happy *souvenirs* of Greece and Italy. In painting, the colouring would be charming; in sculpture, it would be superb in pureness and contour, displaying, as it does, to such advantage the graces of a faultless *tournure*." The women pass their time in attending to their household duties; but their grand occupation is spinning. At this they labour inces-

santly from morning till night, always bearing their work with them wherever they go. Sober and industrious, good wives and mothers, the Roumanian peasant women deserve a happy future. At the Paris Exhibition of 1867 the embroidery and the carpets fabricated by these simple folk held their own against all rivals.

"It is astonishing," says a recent French writer, "what an interesting conversation one may have for hours with uninstructed peasants. This is because the Roumanian colonist of the Danube, thanks to oral tradition, possesses the most varied knowledge (knowledge embellished, it must be confessed, with a number of errors, which by no means deprive it of its grace and *naïveté*), of flowers, the stars, animals, forests, cultivation, places, and past events. The Roumanian peasant excels most of all in telling stories remarkable for the richness and aptitude of the illustrations. In some of these tales we discover the graceful fables of antiquity more or less travestied. Daphne pursued by Apollo, the journey of Jupiter on this earth, Psyche, the rape of the Sabines, the history of Castor and Pollux, and the like. There are peasants who bear Latin names, such as Tullé (Tullius), Corné (Cornelius), Albu, Negru, Maxim, Titu, Vidu (Ovidius), Mariu,

Florea, Stan (Constans), Mané (Manlius or Manilius), and so on." The education of the people has, however, been sadly neglected. In 1871, out of the 28,010 men who were married, only 5,046 were able to sign their names in the register. Out of the 28,010 women, but 2,015 could do the same.

Only a comparatively short time ago, the cottages of the peasants were nothing but hovels, called *bordei*, composed of holes burrowed into the ground, roofed with branches covered with earth, and scarcely rising above the level of the plain. The earth roof, thus formed, speedily became overgrown with grass and weeds, and it would have been difficult to imagine that this was not part of the land, much less a human habitation, had it not been for the occasional clouds of smoke, which issued therefrom at meal-times. A few planks and a saucepan formed the sole furniture of the interior. Now, however, things have taken a turn for the better. Property is respected, and the Roumanian peasant, cheered and invigorated, and once more free, has set to work with a will, for he has no longer any reason to dread that his oxen and his sheep will be seized, and his crops abandoned to the fury of the invader. Villages have arisen, where all was

emptiness and desolation, and the *bordei* have been vacated in favour of the despised Tzigan.

The condition of the peasantry in the past was aptly described by one of their number in 1848, when he made his report to a commission appointed with a view to ameliorating the lot of the poorer classes. I cannot refrain from translating the following extract from this report, which I consider most *à propos*:—"If the *Ciocoï*" (crouching dog or boyard) "could have laid his hand on the sun, he would have seized it and sold to the peasant, for hard cash, God's own light and heat. If the *Ciocoï* could have taken possession of the waters of the sea, he would have made them an object of speculation; and then he would have tortured the peasant with darkness, with cold and thirst, as he has tortured him with hunger, by robbing him of the earth."

In former days, be it understood, the peasants were often so reduced in circumstances, that they were compelled to sell themselves, their wives and families, in order to escape starvation. Slavery was formally abolished in Wallachia on the 5th of August, 1746, and in Moldavia on the 6th of April, 1749; but the infamous institution of the Scutelnici brought the emancipated slaves to a new

era of bondage, from which they have only lately been completely and thoroughly liberated. In the year 1768 there were so many emigrations, that the Porte ordered the Hospodar, Charles Ghika, to treat his subjects with more consideration. In 1775 ten thousand peasants abandoned the plough, and gave themselves up to brigandage. In 1828 the peasants were converted into beasts of burden by the Russians, and obliged to draw their guns and baggage-waggons. Then there was a variety of taxes and obligations, such as the *vinerit*, or levy upon wine; the *vaccarit*, or levy upon cows and oxen; the *oerit*, or levy upon sheep; the *iobagie*, or servitude; the *claca*, or *complaisance;* with many more. The peasant was then so taxed, with reference to days of enforced labour for the benefit of the proprietor and other demands, that he could call neither his time nor his property his own.

But, as I have already stated, matters have much improved. The peasant is now free and entirely his own master. He does a fair day's work for a fair wage, and, if thrifty and frugal, may lay money by and prosper in his generation. His wants are few and inexpensive. There are public institutions in plenty to help him should he fall ill, and there

is no lack of charitable spirits when the winter is unusually protracted or the maize-crop has failed. The very beggar in the streets—and there are not a few of them here—must realise a comfortable income, since none, boyard or priest, shopman or servant, will refuse a small copper coin to the poor and needy.

It has been stated that the Moldo-Wallachian peasant is but an indifferent workman. This is, at the same time, true and untrue. The Roumanian will do thrice as much in a day as the Hungarian and Bulgarian, laughing, chatting, and joking the while. But when he has worked half the week, he usually takes himself off, and nothing will induce him to return until the following Monday. So that in three days he has done nine days' work, while the others have done their six in the whole week. Most masters would not, after all, quarrel with such a bargain.

I have already drawn attention to the Bulgarian emigrants, who are gardeners and paviors at Bucharest. They are also tanners and tinkers. The Bulgarians are very numerous in the towns bordering on the Danube, as well as in that part of Bessarabia which was restored to Roumania by the Treaty of Paris. These people are quiet and in-

offensive, but dull and taciturn. They are a most uninteresting race of men.

To the Armenians I have already referred in the preceding chapter, as well as to the Jews and the Greeks. The cabmen at Bucharest are for the most part of Russian origin. There are also Russians settled in Roumania as farmers, fishermen, merchants, and millers. They are Dissenters, and most of them belong to the sect of the Lipovans.

I cannot conclude this chapter, however, without mentioning two classes of men, who are in great request in the establishments of the boyards. These are the Szeklers and the Albanians. The Szeklers of Transylvania are the kinsmen of Attila and his Huns, and, as such, are recognized as brethren by the dominant Magyar. There are, in Moldavia alone, upwards of 50,000 Szeklers, called *Ciangaï*, settled principally in the departments of Roman, Bacan, and Jassy. These are refugees; but they still adhere to the Roman Catholic faith, and do not intermarry with the native population. Their priests are Italians. But besides these, there are the Szeklers of the towns, who, leaving Transylvania for a certain period, take service as coachmen and grooms, and return home after having saved some money. The women of this race also go in

for domestic service. The men are quarrelsome, often drunkards, but hard as nails, and ready for any adventure.

As for the Albanians, they are the swells of the capital. Their costume is striking in the extreme; red jackets, with gold lace, and gaiters and cap, white *fustanella*, and a perfect battery of arms in their splendidly embroidered girdle. They are the successors of the guards introduced by the *parvenus* of the Phanar, and do duty in the large houses as footmen. They are, I may add, decidedly more ornamental than useful.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GIPSY RACE.

I OUGHT to know something about the Gipsies of Roumania, or *Tzigans*, as they are there called, for several of their cottages fringed the garden of the house in which I lived for two years at Bucharest, and I saw and heard plenty of them. Scarcely had the day begun to dawn, when their fiddles and pipes opened an agreeable concert in honour of Pan, the Lord of all; while now and then the juveniles, tempted by an unusually large cluster of grapes, made the best of their way over the paling which separated our abode from theirs, and helped themselves to the luscious spoil. They were very untidy people, scarcely observing the proprieties of life; only half-clad in the warm weather, while their children ran about wholly destitute of covering. But in the towns they were of some use. The number of bands of *laoutari*, or minstrels, which they formed, would defy any attempt at computation. Every café or beer-garden possessed one of these *troupes*, according to the season, and admirably

soothing was their music, when the ear became accustomed to their peculiar style of melody. The *laoutari* are indeed wonderfully gifted in this respect. Without any previous study, without any acquaintance with the theory or principles of their art, they handle their instruments with a skill which seems implanted in them by Nature herself. Their tunes are of the most weird description, and are heard again and again with ever-increasing pleasure. More wonderful still to relate, after listening for the first time to an air, and without understanding a single note, they are able to reproduce it, in its most complicated form, with the strictest exactness, and with exquisite taste and expression. No one who has not visited this country could believe to what a pitch this native talent can be brought. The *laoutari* also perform at balls, and, oddly enough, at funerals as well. Their favourite instruments are the violin, *shah-aldja*, or king of instruments; the *kobza*, a kind of mandoline; and the *neï*, or pan-pipe, which they have brought from Persia. In Clausenburg, one of the towns of Transylvania, the Tzigans have formed a company, and, wandering from place to place, return after a certain time to head-quarters, where they divide their gains, which often amount to a considerable sum.

Formerly serfs, the Gipsies are now free men. They are cooks, blacksmiths, builders, and makers of bricks. Although some of them have settled down to the cultivation of the soil, the majority prefer a wandering mode of life, and alternately steal and beg. In the country they often dwell in tents, or in some hovel hastily contrived. There they are to be seen, *pêle-mêle*, men, women, children, pigs, and dogs. Idle to a degree, they are always studying how to exist without performing their daily round of work. Humour them, and they are easily led. Treat them, however, as your fellow-men and fellow-citizens, and you will make nothing of them. Such is their character. Moreover, so improvident are their habits, that all their employers are obliged to pay them back in food, for all the money received at the end of the week is spent at the wine-shop on the Sunday, and nothing remains but starvation until the arrival of the following Saturday.

Besides these, there are a few Turkish Tzigans, called *Turciti*. They are Mahomedans, from the other side of the Danube, and perform the functions of tinkers, or menders of kettles and pots. They speak the Gipsy language mingled with the Turkish tongue. In their leisure time they devote

their attention to the rearing of buffaloes, the milk of which is their principal sustenance during the winter months.

There are two distinct types of Gipsies in Roumania. One set have crisp hair and thick lips, with a very dark complexion. The others have a fine profile, regular features, good hair, and an olive complexion, all characteristics of the Indo-Caucasian race. The former are the descendants of the old emigrants, about whose origin so many different theories have been advanced. The latter are descended from the refugees of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, who left India at the time of the great Mogul invasions under Genghis Khan, and Tamerlane. It has been remarked that, while one race is easily to be taught and brought to a right comprehension of the advantages of civilization, the other delights in ignorance, and cannot be improved at any price. It is related that Joseph II. attempted the education of this obstinate tribe amid the mountains of Transylvania. The families were placed on various lordly domains and forbidden to quit them. But the inhabitants were at last compelled to get rid of them all. Houses were built for them; they drove their cows in and pitched their tents alongside. And the children who were

apprenticed among the villagers, seized the first opportunity to take themselves off, and soon rejoined their parents.

Among the Tzigans of Indian origin many men are to be found who are well versed in oriental traditions. The old people explain, with wonderful sagacity, by astronomical phenomena, all the various religions. Even the little children catch the inspiration, and come out with most poetical allusions. A traveller relates that, as he was proceeding one day along the road leading from Shumla to Rasgrad, the little ones who walked in front, seeing the sun rising in the east, exclaimed, "*Io panuel*, There is Pan." "*Jese de sobo Krin*, He is leaving his couch," said one. "*Urgaha*, He is climbing the heavens," cried another. And he showed the traveller the moon, whose white disc was fast disappearing in the west, amid the blue of the sky, and continued, "*Iak ebhu dabes*, The eye of the earth grows pale."

According to the Tzigans, all religion is based on the harmony of astronomical phenomena; and Brahminism, Judaism, and Christianity, are but forms of the religion whose cosmogonic mysteries have been revealed to them by their ancestors. The sky is a vast sea of darkness, from which

light emanates, and to which it returns. God is the *ix*, or the invisible axis, around which eternity revolves. The sidereal zone, which we term the zodiac, is the *stole*, or starry robe which God puts on in the east when Pan sets in the west. It is from this robe, the *apo-stole*, that have proceeded all the grand voices which have made themselves heard throughout all ages in this world of ours. The four points of the solstices and the equinoxes are the four principal heavenly messengers. The four seasons or times determined by these points, are the four great voices or oracles of God, His four great prophets or evangelists. The twelve months, which complete these four great times, are the twelve little books of God; the twelve oxen or bulls of the night and the day, who sustain the ocean of the seasons and the brazen wall of Solomon's Temple; the twelve tables of the laws of Moses and Romulus, in which are inscribed the Ten Commandments of *Bud-dha*, or Moses; the twelve sons of Jacob, rocks of Israel at Sinai and the Jordan; and the twelve apostles of Jesus, rocks of Christ at the Jordan and at Golgotha itself. Whatever the estimate which we may form of the value of these traditions, it cannot be denied that they testify to habits of meditation very different

from those of the masters who so long bought and sold them in the open market.

The first laws in Roumania relative to the Tzigans of which mention is made go back as far as the reigns of Rudolph IV. and Stephen the Great, who made one-fifth of them state property. Other princes afterwards gave up the remaining four-fifths to the boyards and the monasteries. The Tzigans are divided into three classes or tribes. First come the *Laïesi*, who follow a multitude of trades. To this class the *laoutari* belong. Next we have the *Vatrari*, or servants, who are employed in the great houses. The third division is that of the *Netotsi*, or atheists, the probable descendants of the emigrants of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These are the most savage and wild of all the Gipsy race. Half naked, and living only by theft and plunder, they feed on the flesh of cats and dogs, sleep on the bare ground or in some ruin or barn, and possess absolutely no property of any kind. They have a strong resemblance to the negro physiognomy and character. Each of these tribes elects its judge and its supreme head, who is called *Bul-basha*. The election is made in the open country. The judge and the *Bul-basha* formerly wore the full beard, a sign of nobility, always rode on horseback,

and were clad in a long red mantle, coloured boots, and the Phrygian cap.

The Tzigans are, as I have said, now free, and able to settle or roam where they please. Their condition is improving every day; but the Roumans naturally look down upon even the best of them. Gradual intermarriages with the native population may, however, finally place the more steady-going among them in the position to which they aspire.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GOVERNMENT.

ROUMANIA possesses a constitutional government in accordance with the rules established by the Constitution of the 12th of July, 1866. The Prince is the head of the State, and there are two Parliamentary Chambers, the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. The budgets are voted by the Deputies alone, after the fashion of our House of Commons. The executive power is in the hands of the Prince, who wields it conformably with the principles of the Constitution. The person of the Prince is inviolable. The Ministers are judged by the Court of Cassation. There is perfect liberty of the press; newspapers cannot be censured, or warned, or suspended. The country is divided, in the French style, into departments, *arrondissements*, and *communes*. There is a prefect at the head of the first; a sub-prefect over the second; while a mayor (in Roumanian, *primar*), presides over the third. The Senate contains sixty-eight members, exclusive of the archbishops and diocesan bishops, who aresenators by virtue of their office.

Two senators are elected for every district; and the universities of Bucharest and Jassy send up each a member, chosen by the professors. The indispensable conditions of the post are a revenue of 9,400 francs, and the age of the candidate, who must be more than forty years old. The Chamber of Deputies is composed of 157 members, who are elected by various colleges. There are four of these colleges. The first is formed by citizens possessing a regular income of more than 3,550 francs; the second by citizens with a regular income of between 3,550 and 1,185 francs; the third (that of the towns) comprises the merchants and artizans, who pay the state a tax of thirty francs; and, besides these, the members of the liberal professions, retired officers, professors, and retired civil servants. These three colleges elect directly as follows. The first two a deputy each, and the third a number of deputies according to the size of the towns; Bucharest, six; Jassy, four; Craïova, Gallati, Focsiani, Berlad, Ploesti, Botosiani, three each; Roman, Braïla, Bacau, Pitesci, and Turnu-Severin, two each; with a total of fifty-eight. The fourth college includes all the citizens who pay the State a tax of any kind, however small it may be. A deputy is chosen for every district; fifty electors name a delegate, and the delegates elect the deputy.

The French codes, modified in order to suit the manners and customs of the country, are in vogue in Roumania. One of the principal alterations has been that relating to Divorce. Divorce is allowed by the Roumanian law, as was the case in the French Civil code before the Law of the 8th of May, 1816. The code of Civil procedure is imitated from the Swiss legislation, which is less complicated than that of France. The Commercial code is almost entirely the same as in France. The Penal code has been a little more modified, and certain crimes are styled "misdemeanours" in the Roumanian code. Roumania has a Court of Cassation, four Courts of Appeal, and a Tribunal for each district capital. The tribunals of the most populous districts have each two or more sections or chambers, like the French tribunals. The High Court of Cassation comprises a president in chief, two presidents, fourteen councillors, a *procureur-général* and two section *procureurs*. It has two chambers. The members must be licentiates or doctors of Law, who are nominated by the head of the State. The juries are chosen from among the citizens by lot. The procedure of the Assize Courts is almost the same as in France. There is no capital punishment in this country, murder being punished by a life-long

imprisonment at the salt-mines. As for the divorces, to which I have already alluded, there are about 1000 applications *per annum*. Divorce is pronounced in about a quarter of these cases. Formerly the Church, which decided these matters, was far more indulgent.

The total revenue of the State, in 1875, was 91,441,418 francs. Of this, 29,082,017 francs were derived from direct taxation; 19,075,132 francs from Government property and rights; and 6,500,000 francs from the Post-office, the Telegraph, and the Railroads. The Tobacco monopoly brought in 8,010,000 francs. The Army cost 18,275,674 francs; and 5,100,356 francs were expended upon Public works. The Theatres cost 33,408 francs; the Universities, 422,798 francs; and the Churches, 661,908 francs. I have selected the year 1875, because after that date the country was affected by the wars and commotions raging around it. The *contribution personnelle* brought in 10,097,849 francs. Minors, the Clergy, the Army, and the very poor are exempt from this tax, which was paid by 765,030 persons. The Income-tax is rated at 6 per cent.; but the inhabitants of Jassy only pay at the rate of 3 per cent. This is because they have sustained severe losses through the union of the two Princi-

palities, Jassy being no longer a capital town. Licenses for the sale of wine and spirits amounted to 7,700,000 francs. Eleven sets of articles are allowed to pass free through the Custom-house, when they are being imported into the country. These include books, works of art, iron, steam-engines, useful machinery, and chemicals. In the same manner, nine sets of articles are allowed to be exported free of Custom-house duties. They include salt, tobacco, corn, wine, petroleum, the produce of the mines, and manufactures. For the cattle which pass over from Austro-Hungary into Roumania during a portion of the year, a pasturage tax is paid to the State, which in 1875 amounted to 55,000 francs. The tobacco monopoly has done a vast deal of mischief, and has ruined the exportation trade. The National Debt reached, on the 1st of July, 1875, the sum of 167,181,968 francs. It now, thanks to the war, far exceeds that figure.

Roumania has several diplomatic agents to look after its interests abroad. There are agents at Constantinople, Paris (for England and France), Vienna, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Rome, and Belgrade. Most of the foreign powers have agents and consuls-general at Bucharest, and consuls and vice-consuls in the principal towns.

Every Roumanian citizen is bound, in time of need, to bear arms between the ages of twenty-one and forty-six. Between twenty-one and twenty-nine those upon whom the lot has fallen are enrolled in the permanent or the territorial army. The remainder are draughted into the Militia, where they serve until they are thirty-seven. After this, and until they are forty-five, they are enrolled in the National Guard. The men belonging to the territorial army serve one week per month with their regiments. Every year the territorial army assembles at its full strength for twenty days, that time being devoted to marches, manœuvres, and the like. The duty of the territorial army is to guard the frontier and to act as a *gendarmerie* in the departments. The period of service in the permanent army is eight years: four in active service and four with the reserve. The permanent army, in 1875, numbered 18,542 men; there were in the territorial army, 43,744: thus forming a total of 62,286. In these figures I take no account of the war. My sole object is to describe the country in its normal condition. The rest I leave to the newspaper correspondents, who have kept the public thoroughly *au courant* as regards these and other matters.

Owing to the abolition of capital punishment, life is, I fear, not so much valued in Moldo-Wallachia as it ought to be. As an instance of this I may cite the murder of a servant-girl, which occurred while I was at Bucharest. The girl had been sent by her mistress to market, and, while engaged in making some purchases, had found fault with the weight of some meat which she had bought. The butcher, at her request, accompanied her to the Prefecture of Police, and an opinion was pronounced in favour of the girl, the weight being in reality under the standard. Without more ado, then, the butcher drew his knife, and, before the assembled officials, plunged it into the heart of the girl. Another day a gentleman was walking in his courtyard with his brother, when they happened to quarrel over some disputed point. He immediately pulled out a revolver and shot his brother dead. I was informed that three months' imprisonment set everything straight. A boyard also shot his wife's coachman, because he refused to tell him where he had driven her. A small fine settled this business. Indeed, only recently the best road to success in a lawsuit was a liberal supply of *backsheesh.* Justice, *pure et simple*, was not much valued. High officials, even Ministers themselves, were sometimes brought

to account for a questionable use of the finances committed to their care, and fortunes were daily made by those in power. Nor were the members of the Cabinet always to be kept in order. On one occasion a Minister ran his pen through the Prince's signature, and Carol I. had no choice but to comply. On another occasion, in the year 1872, an attempt was made to get the Hohenzollern out of the country, and it was openly said that the then Prime Minister, Prince Ion Ghika, who had planned the *coup d'état*, had had every telegraph wire in his pay for twenty-four hours, so that not a word of news should reach Berlin. The Prince, indeed, was at one time so unpopular that he was almost sent to Coventry. The Princess, a very pattern of all that is excellent, but simple and quiet in her tastes almost to a fault, also came in for her share of abuse. I have heard, though I cannot speak quite positively, that the pair were within an ace of leaving the country to its own devices. The Princess, it was declared, spent one whole night on her knees before her husband, begging and praying him to leave; but he remained firm and weathered the storm, though he would have gone had not Bismarck prevailed on him to stay.

When I travelled in the *diligence* to the Transyl-

vanian frontier, we were accompanied by a couple of soldiers as a guard. This precaution was necessary, as there were brigands and robbers about. There have from time immemorial been *troupes* of *banditti* both in Wallachia and Moldavia, composed of peasants who have been ruined by the invasions and by the rapacity of their masters, and of other disaffected men. The Russo-Turkish war has largely increased the bands of robbers.

As a specimen of the contempt which is sometimes shown for authority in any shape in this country, I may mention a story for the truth of which I can confidently vouch. During the last winter of my residence at Bucharest, one of the singers at the Opera had the ill-luck to become unpopular with a certain set. No sooner did she appear on the stage than the signal for a general uproar was given; the curtain was dropped and confusion reigned supreme. At length, after a few nights, the manager, growing weary of this kind of amusement, called in the police, and a free fight was the result. The effect was highly comical. The *jeunesse dorée* of Roumania battling with common policemen in the arena of the pit, mothers and sisters looking down on the tournament from the boxes above. The scene, indeed, could be more

easily imagined than described. However, the riots still continued, and at length terminated in a real, honest engagement. Some of the golden youth afore-mentioned were taken into custody and imprisoned for a longer or a shorter period, according to the quality of their crimes and misdemeanours, and there seemed to be every prospect of peace. Vain hope! On the following evening a young sub-lieutenant, the brother of one of the offenders, stalked into the theatre, and approaching the prefect of police in one of the intervals, gave him a sound box on the ear. The old man instantly drew his sword, which the other as quickly seized and broke across his knee.

The consequence of this escapade was the loss of our sub-lieutenant's commission and two years' imprisonment, a very fair punishment for such a piece of insubordination. Yet—will it be believed?—all Bucharest sympathised with the lad, and abused the old prefect most heartily. Another night, also at the theatre, a gentleman observed another, seated in the next box to his own, looking in his direction. Becoming furious, he threw his opera-glass into his face, with the exclamation, "How dare you look at my wife?" Of course the insult could not be passed over, and a duel was the

result. The theatre is, as will be seen, a fertile scene of strife. One more anecdote in connection with it ere I proceed to another topic. One night at the close of one of the Grand Opera *bals masqués*, two gentlemen found themselves standing on the steps outside, each with a lady on his arm. Each had hailed a cab, but only one was forthcoming. Whose was it to be? Neither would yield the point, so there was one more duel on the list on the following morning.

The consuls-general and agents at Bucharest have, as a rule, a very easy time of it. Perhaps the most active are the Russian and the American. The Russian agent used, after the manner of his fellow-countrymen in foreign parts, to mix himself up in various intrigues, and to attend the meetings held by discontented Bulgarians. The American agent was Mr. Peixotto, a gentleman of the Jewish persuasion. No one ever knew, whilst I was at Bucharest, whether he was really in the pay of Americans or Jews. Certainly he was not wanted for Americans, as there were none in the place, if we except a dentist, who took good care of himself. And, to complicate matters, the best Jews would have nothing to say to him. He amused himself with constantly sending up sensational reports to some M.P., with whom he

was evidently on intimate terms. One—his, I believe—was gravely quoted in Parliament. It was, as far as I can remember, that the Jews were being massacred all over the country, and that the rest — Paddy again — were saving themselves by swimming over the Danube. Now, considering that the "beautiful blue Danube" is a very broad river, Mr. Peixotto should have been asked to explain how it was that the Jews, of all people, had become such expert swimmers.

Before I conclude this chapter on the Government and administration of Roumania, I wish to draw attention for a moment to an interesting document, the Code of Basil the Wolf, Hospodar of Moldavia, who flourished from 1634 to 1654. This Code contains forty articles, some of which are models of cruelty, while others are equally patterns of wisdom. I shall quote a few, because they will serve to give some idea of the characters and feelings of the Princes of those days:—

8. If the *Scindrome* (Gipsy slave) of a boyard or any other proprietor, his wife or one of their children, steal *once*, *twice* or *thrice* a fowl, a goose, or any other trifle, they shall be pardoned; but if they steal something more valuable, they shall be punished like robbers.

9. He who, reduced to the last necessity, shall have stolen only to clothe himself and that he may not die of hunger, shall obtain a free pardon.

14. He who may discover a treasure by means of sorcery, shall not be allowed to touch it, the whole belonging to the Hospodar.

17. He who betrays his native country shall be punished more than a parricide.

21. Every man is advised to avoid any one who may insult him, in order that no harm may ensue.

22. Every nobleman or *employé* who flees before the aggressor is accounted infamous.

26. Every husband who surrenders his wife to another man shall be punished with death, although up to the present time the Law has been content to banish him, or to send him to the galleys for life, after being led through all the streets of the town, naked and mounted on an ass, with his head turned towards the tail, the woman herself leading the ass by the bridle.

28. The slave, the salaried man, and the servant who may ravish a woman, shall not only be punished with death, but condemned to be burnt.

30. He who carries off an adulteress, with her consent, shall not be punished in any way.

36. If a judge say that he has acted by order of

the Prince, he must not be believed before he have proved his words by the instructions signed by the Prince or by witnesses.

37. A judge may extenuate a penalty where love is concerned. Love is the same as intoxication or madness. It is indeed even worse than madness. That is why this law has been made.

38. He who commits a fault, led on by love, shall be less severely punished than the law sets forth.

39. He who, yielding to love, meets a girl in the road and embraces her, shall not be punished at all.

40. Nobility is an extenuation. Therefore neither nobles, nor boyards, nor their sons, shall be condemned to the galleys, or to the mines, but shall be banished for a longer or a shorter period. They cannot be hanged, nor impaled, nor drawn through the streets, like ordinary malefactors; but they shall be beheaded.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CHURCH.

THE religion of Moldo-Wallachia is the Greek Orthodox; but the Church of Roumania has always been independent of all foreign supremacy. According to the 21st Article of the Constitution, the affairs of the Church are managed by a synod composed of two metropolitan archbishops, of six diocesan bishops, and of from eight to ten bishops without dioceses. There are eight dioceses, two being archbishoprics, and six bishoprics. The bishops are chosen from the monkish order, and are elected by the Senate, the Chamber of Deputies, and the members of the Synod formed into one Electoral College. There are now about 9,800 secular priests, 1,700 monks, and 2,270 nuns. In the entire country there are about 6,550 churches and 173 monasteries, convents, and abbeys. According to the Civil Law of 1864, only those who have completed their studies at the Seminary of the higher degree can become monks at any age. The remainder are not eligible until they are sixty. An

exception is made in favour of those who are the victims of an incurable disease. Women, in like manner, cannot enter a convent until they are fifty years of age. Incurables, and those unmarried women who consent to serve in the hospitals or in the State educational establishments, are, however, admitted. Up to the time of the war no *religieuse* had worked in the hospitals as a Sister of Charity. There are also two Roman Catholic bishops, bearing the title of Apostolic Vicars. The Roman Catholics, about 132,000 in number, possess sixty-four churches.

According to the Greek rule, every man who takes priests' orders must be married; but, should his wife die before him, he is not allowed to wed a second. The priests here lead peaceful, regular lives, and, like the curates in our own country, almost invariably have large families. Still, though their *ménage* is remarkable for no ostentation, they are usually comfortably off, and have wherewith to procure for their children a decent position in the world. There are, unhappily, many ignorant men amongst them, for they belong, almost without exception, to the plebeian order; and it is to be regretted that this is the case, as their influence on the aristocracy must necessarily be very limited.

Some of them are attached to each church. Their duties, in the towns at least, are the reverse of onerous, and much of their time is spent in sitting about the churchyards, with their hands crossed over their long sticks, engaged in conversation with some lounger like themselves. They, like their flocks, are, as I have said, not over well educated, and their worship is not always of the most enlightened; for, where superstition is concerned, this Church is not one whit behind, but rather far in advance of, her sister of Rome. Both priests and people are more ignorant, more fanatical than the mass of the Roman Catholics. Amongst the latter there are many who can enumerate all the saints in the calendar, and garnish their list with many a legend and anecdote; yet, where it is a simple question of Bible knowledge, they invariably show themselves to be almost totally unacquainted with the same. Saint Demetrius is the grand saint, and his bones are promenaded through highways and byways, escorted by a host of priests and by a goodly company of the faithful, whenever that fickle element, rain, becomes too coy or too lavish of its sweets. The village priest is more useful than his brother of the town, for he works in the fields like a common peasant, and is usually the most success-

ful of all. "When," says Héliade, "one speaks of the village priest in Moldo-Wallachia, one must imagine a simple peasant, the equal in every respect of his parishioners. He has the same instruction, the same costume, the same duties. He tills the ground, and feeds his wife and children. He labours on the farm, and performs the *corvée* when the protecting armies invade the country. He is only expected to know how to read the printed books of the Church. If he know, by chance, how to write or read manuscript, it is a piece of luxury. All that he has to do is to perform divine service and recite the Gospels in the national tongue, just as they are, without any commentary of his own." Thus we see the peasant-priest encouraging his flock by his example, and sometimes siding with it in its insurrectionary movements. This was particularly the case in 1848. The village priest has escaped the corruption of the towns, by which his city *confrère* has been affected from time to time. The metropolitans were often very conspicuous in joining with cruel Hospodars to oppress the suffering people.

The lands held by the Church are very extensive, the convents and monasteries being remarkably well cared for. Many of the churches at Bucharest

were, like the hospitals, built and endowed by private boyards. The Phanariote Princes did a vast amount of harm to the national Church. They caused the richest monasteries in Roumania to be dedicated to the Greek establishments of the Holy Sepulchre, Mount Sinai, and Mount Athos. This dedication, which was at first a simple act of homage, soon degenerated into servitude. The Greeks got the Princes to allow them to send *Igoumenoi* (abbots) to the different monasteries, ostensibly as their representatives, but in reality with a view to the appropriation of the revenues, which was soon done. Thus more than a third of the property in the two provinces passed for a time into the hands of strangers, the convents of Sinai and Athos reaping all the profits. As might have been expected, Russia has more than once taken part in the religious quarrels of the Roumanians, and on every occasion by no means to its disadvantage.

The festivals and fasts appointed by the Church exercise a very deleterious effect on the native population. About half the year the people are on a starvation diet, eating haricot beans and prunes boiled in water; while the other half they are at the *cabarets*, imbibing the most horrible trash in the

shape of *raku*, that could possibly be invented. During the season of Lent, when the snow is beginning to clear away, and when they are in the fields, working hard, sowing and planting from morning till night, they ought to be well fed and well kept. But the reverse is the case; they speedily become exhausted and dispirited; and fall easy victims to the miasma which reigns around. The pestilential fevers with which Roumania abounds are naturally especially noxious during the spring, when the ice melts and the heat of the sun draws poisonous exhalations from the swampy ground. It is a well-known fact that the number of births is comparatively very small towards the end of the year; and this is attributed to the insufficient nourishment taken by married people during the season of Lent, when the natural strength is exhausted to an extent which is most reprehensible. For example, in 1870, only 3,790 girls were born during the month of December, while in March there were 7,050 births of girls. In 1871, 3,847 girls were born in December, as compared with 6,500 in March.

I have alluded to the superstitious habits of the people; but they prevail, more or less, in every rank of life. The children of the boyards will wear amulets, to protect them from surrounding dangers,

such as epidemics and the like; and I have even seen officers who had rings in their ears, which were supposed to have a similar power. On high days and holidays the ladies drive to church, merely to kiss some relique, and return home at once. This they consider a work of piety. Among the poorer folk there is a wide-spread belief in the efficacy of sacred *icons*. The *icon* of one church will discover stolen goods; that of another finds husbands for old maids; another *icon* assists women in obtaining a divorce. This is Sânta Vinere (Saint Venus), who is also equally prized for reasons of a more equivocal character. The priests, by the way, I may here add, visit the houses of their districts on the first day of every month, and plentifully bespatter the occupants and their chattels with holy water. I have been informed, on good authority, that they even extend their visits to the domiciles of the most abandoned characters, who consider that their libations possess a salutary influence, which may stand them in good stead during the coming month. Some of the churches let out to the sick metal plates, upon which an eye is engraved, or which are formed in the shape of a leg, an arm, or some other member. These plates are placed on the afflicted part to which they correspond, and the benighted

sufferer confidently expects that he will be healed in the course of a very few days. Sometimes, however, as one might presume, this kind of doctoring is productive of very serious consequences. A child, stricken down with the fever, is deposited on the pavement of a church, and the priest strides over it as if in the act of crossing a running stream. Another curious custom which the ignorant people observe, is that of placing the priest's girdle round the loins of women in labour, no one ever doubting that this precaution will greatly facilitate the *accouchement.*

The peasants also believe in sorcerers, fairies, and ghosts; though it must be admitted that the poor of many other countries are in the same plight. They, however, dread the vampire as well—a far more serious affair. It is supposed that anyone who has incurred ecclesiastical censure is liable to this at his death. Slow decomposition, or some disturbance of the turf over the grave, are considered certain signs that the soul will not leave the body. A little caterwauling and the sighing of the breeze in the neighbouring forest complete the scare. The peasants assemble and oblige the relatives of the departed one to dig up the body, and give the *pope* a handsome donation to free it from

the effects of the excommunication. Then there is any amount of hurrying and scurrying and exorcising, until the poor wretches are half ruined and the sensation is over. This is a fine day's work for the priest. Another ridiculous superstition is the notion that anyone who paints your portrait robs you, with every touch of his brush, of a corresponding day of your life. So much is this the case, that on one occasion a man whom an artist wished to sketch, had to be placed between two *gendarmes* and forcibly committed to the canvas, he being all the time persuaded that his fate was sealed for ever.

Another time this artist was peacefully sketching the ruins of an old tower, when a Tzigan leaped upon him, knife in hand, and, making use of any but admiring expressions, asked him what he meant by profaning the abode of the heroes of the past. And, will it be believed, the French consul had to be called before the affair could be settled in a manner consonant with the future safety of the luckless votary of Nature and the monuments of a by-gone age. The Roumanians hate working at anything connected with metals. This is because the Tzigans, who are the only blacksmiths in the land, also fabricate vessels of iron and copper; and

the peasant would think himself irretrievably disgraced were he to follow the same *métier*.

It is not therefore surprising that those enlightened people who have a soul above such nonsense as this, have become practically indifferent to the holy teaching of religion. I was once astounded to learn from some excellent people, who occupied a high position at Bucharest, and who were remarkable for their goodness and their charities, that, though outwardly Christians, they had absolutely no belief. Their so-called faith was a national affair, so, being good patriots and anxious to set an example by which others might profit, they regularly performed their duties, religious as well as social; but in private life, and among intimate friends, they discarded the mask, and they told me that many others agreed entirely with them. Religion, they urged, was all very well for those who could neither reason nor control themselves. But they were above it. And really, on after-reflection, I could scarcely condemn them, for in their minds religion was associated with the observance of base and superstitious practices. Thus has it come about that even University men are often totally ignorant of the very elements of religious instruction. The aristocracy patronise the Church, but do not allow

it to interfere with their mode of life. A priest is rarely to be found in one of their *salons*. One priest, however, I do remember, who sometimes visited at a certain house; but he was the butt of the company, and the grand amusement was to get him to sing French songs of a rather equivocal character, he, unhappy man, being, it is needless to say, blissfully ignorant of the language. But if a foreigner were to lay his hand on a priest, a hundred knives would at once dart out, and summary vengeance be inflicted on the culprit.

Before I conclude this chapter, I really ought to mention the splendid Hospital service which prevails throughout the country. There are, in nearly all the departments, hospitals kept up at the expense of the respective districts. Twelve hospitals alone have been founded by private persons. The *Ephorie* of Hospitals at Bucharest is an administration quite independent of the State, though it is under its control. Its annual revenue, derived from the extensive properties bequeathed to it from time to time by charitable persons, amounts to no less a sum than 2,082,437 francs. It comprises seven hospitals at Bucharest and a hospital at Ploesti, the total number of beds attaining the more than respectable figure of 961. About 11,900 sufferers

are relieved every year. Consultations are given *gratis* in most of the hospitals, making 33,253 consultations; while medicine is also distributed, free of charge, to the value of 17,042 francs. There are institutions for orphan boys and girls, where the children are taught carpentering, sewing, millinery, and other useful trades. The foundling admits about 182 children *per annum;* and some forty boys are annually adopted or received as apprentices. It is not at all an unusual practice to adopt children when a man has none. I knew an old boyard, a bachelor, who had adopted no less than three girls. The institution of St. Spiridon keeps up hospitals in nine towns, including Jassy, Gallati, and Roman, with a total of 841 beds. But the finest hospital of all is that founded by the Bibesco-Brancovano family at Bucharest. It has 200 beds.

Whatever their faults—and have not we all our own besetting sins, according to our several dispositions and temperaments?—the Roumanians are pre-eminently kindly and charitable. And this remark applies to all classes alike. There is a *bonhomie* about them all which covers a multitude of sins. They are like spoilt children, prodigal one moment, peevish the next. But no one can deny

the fact that they are generous in the extreme, and this from no mere love of ostentation. Their churches may be counted by thousands; their bishops and many of their priests are fed on the fat of the land; their monasteries and convents are numerous; and they are unsparing in their liberality when their feelings are once aroused. I doubt not that the Russo-Turkish war has seen many a deed of kindness unknown save to donor and recipient. Generosity is the noblest of qualities, and there are perhaps very few who, sinning so much against themselves, offend so little against their fellows.

CHAPTER IX.

THE COUNTRY.

I HAVE introduced my reader, stage by stage, to the capital, and have endeavoured to give him, as far as lay in my power, some faint appreciation of the various elements of which the population, native and foreign, is composed. Each class has been passed in review, and a certain idea, more or less clear, has been formed of the persons whom one meets in daily life and social intercourse. The institutions of the State, the Government, the Army, the Church, and the Charitable establishments, have all been briefly discussed. I shall now endeavour, to the best of my ability, to extend my basis of operations, and to give some description of the country itself, enumerating its principal towns, its peculiarities, its produce, and resources. In so doing, my remarks must necessarily be of a somewhat cursory nature, for a detailed account would scarcely be palatable to the general reader, for whose benefit these pages are penned. The student I must refer to various works, which appear from

time to time in French and German, and which are more or less correct, according to the opportunities possessed by their authors of acquiring accurate information. I may, however, here observe that the opinions of foreign writers on Roumania are not always to be implicitly relied on, seeing that, as a rule, they arrive in the country with prejudices already formed. The French cannot find words for their praise, while the Germans are usually hard and cynical. Thus a false colouring constantly pervades the whole tone of an otherwise valuable book, the reader being of course the greatest sufferer.

Roumania is composed of the ancient Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, which, always separate before that date, were definitively united, by the election of Colonel Couza to the vacant thrones, on the 23rd of December, 1861. The name of "Danubian Principalities," by which they have often been called, must be condemned, for Servia may equally claim to be termed a Danubian Principality. Roumania prides itself on being the representative of the Dacia of Trajan, which comprised, besides it, Transylvania, the Bukovine, Bessarabia, and the Banate of Temesvar, with a capital city Sarmisægethusa, or Ulpia-Trajana, the modern

village of Varhély. Bounded by Austria, Russia, and Turkey, the country partakes of the character of the provinces by which it is environed. Mountainous in some parts, it has in others miles upon miles of steppes, more or less fertile, it is true, but still in places very dreary, and swampy and marshy. The same features are perceptible both in Wallachia and Moldavia. Low lands near the Danube, then undulating valleys, culminating in hills and mountains as the Transylvanian Carpathians are approached. From this rule I should, however, except the Banate of Craïova, or Little Wallachia, which fringes the Banate of Temesvar. It is uniformly hilly. Wallachia alone possesses 875 mountains and 304 hills; and Moldavia even exceeds that number. The principal passes are those of Verciorova, Vulcan, Turnu-Rosiu, Bran, Temes, Buzeu, Cornu-Lunci, Tulgèsi, Ghimèsi, Oïtus and Burgul. The top of Ciacleu, or Pion, the highest mountain in Roumania, is surmounted by a rocky peak called the *Panagia*, or Holy Virgin. Both Wallachia and Moldavia are traversed by countless rivers and streams; a circumstance which has led certain etymologists to infer that the name of the former is a corruption of the words *Vallis aquarum*. The largest of these are the Pruth and the Sereth, in Moldavia, both of

which are navigable. Among the others one may notice the Buzeu, a rapid torrent; the Jalomitia, a lovely stream gliding along through masses of verdure and innumerable gardens; the Dambovitza, already mentioned as passing through Bucharest, and noted for the size and quality of its fish; the Milkov; the Oltu, which divides Great from Little Wallachia, and the Prahova. So tortuous is the last, that it has to be crossed seventy times on the road from Bucharest to Cronstadt. The admirable distribution of plains, mountains, and hills for which these provinces are remarkable has long been extolled by the traveller. I have seen, wrote Carra, as early as 1718, nearly all the countries in Europe, but I know none which surpasses Moldavia and Wallachia in the advantages which they offer alike to the agriculturist and the artist. The river system is indeed the making of the country. Always kept well watered, Roumania has for its southern boundary the Danube, the great highway of commerce, which flows, as it were, at the bottom of every field. The importance of this river cannot be overrated, and it should always be preserved open and neutral down to the Black Sea. Its principal mouths, which are jealously guarded by the Commission, are those of Soulina, St. George, and

Kilia. Happy indeed the country which possesses such a natural outlet. The Danube forms a number of lakes upon its banks, and along the Black Sea others are also to be found. Some of these are salt and brackish.

Roumania is, in every respect, a land richly endowed by Nature. Its agricultural wealth is only equalled by its mineral. Gold is to be found in the beds of the rivers, notably in those of the Oltu and the Argès, as well as in the mountains of Argès, Rucar, Tirgovisti, Bacau, Nemtiu, and Suciava. There are men always at work, busily engaged, on their own account, in searching for the precious metal. Formerly a number of Tzigans, employed by the State, and called *aurari*, were kept for this special employment, the revenue belonging by right to the reigning princesses of Wallachia and Moldavia. But the rapacity of Russians and Turks inflicted a deadly blow upon this *exploitation*, and boyards, on whose estates mines were discovered, hardly dared to profit by their good fortune. Silver is found at Baïa-de-Arama, in the district of Méhédintii, as well as in the mountains of Valcea. Lead appears in the highlands between Moldavia and Wallachia, and iron in the districts of Buzeu and Gorjiu, where vestiges of former works are to be

traced. Mercury has been met with on both banks of the Oltu, and in the towns of Rimnic and Pitesci. Nothing has, however, been done to obtain mercury, and its locality has been carefully concealed, as it has been feared that an imprudent use might be made of it by the poorer classes. There is copper at Chirilu, as well as at Baïa-de-Arama. Most of the amber in the country is either black or brown. Marble is to be found at Olanesci, at Albesci, and at Vallea-Doamnei. At Albesci, which is near Campulung, a very fine marble is procured; it is easily cut, but hardens after some time.

There is a small volcano at Malovetiu, situated not far from the town of Cerneti, in the district of Méhédintii. Ever and anon it boils over, emitting smoke and even flames, though never any lava. Peat is very common. Salt is scattered in rich profusion over the length and breadth of the land, and is a staple article of produce. I shall have occasion to refer to it in another part of this work. Petroleum also abounds in Roumania, where, after America, it is most plentiful. The mode of extracting it is so peculiar, that I cannot do better than give an account thereof. The work is performed by bands of labourers, who form a gang of

their own, composed of seven members, headed by a chief, whom they elect. The first thing done is to dig a well, as it may be termed, after which one of the number descends and begins to excavate. At the mouth of this well stand two comrades, whose duty it is to raise their companion, by means of a winch, as soon as he signals to them to do so. After a certain depth has been reached, the process becomes one of danger, and the workman is rarely able to remain below more than a quarter of an hour. When he arrives at the top, he is quite dizzy, and reels like a drunken man. Others take his place, one by one, until the thing is finished. The labourers wear a long canvas shirt and a Chinese hat, made of tin, to shield them from the petroleum and water which pour down upon their devoted shoulders. As a general rule, the well yields about 360 *litras* per day, until it is drained dry. Five hundred *litras* per day is considered a capital stroke of business. Sometimes, however, water supervenes, and spoils the whole work; and the well has to be reluctantly abandoned, the labour being entirely lost. A good well goes on yielding petroleum for about a year; but during the last few months it is not so abundant. The making of a well 60 *mètres* in depth costs about 3,000 francs.

A well from 120 to 180 *mètres* in depth demands an outlay of 9,000 francs.

At Bucharest, Gallati, and Ploesti, not to mention other places, there are factories where the petroleum is refined, there being different degrees of purity, including paraffin and benzine. The distilling processes in vogue are not, as a rule, particularly successful. While on this topic, I cannot omit a notice of the mineral waters, which are very plentiful in Roumania, and nearly always cold. They are, however, rarely worked; why, I know not. The source at Vacaresci, which lies just outside Bucharest, is an exception to the general rule. It is freely used by the inhabitants, and the neighbourhood is now a fashionable promenade.' This source was discovered in 1871, while I was in Wallachia. M. Milo, the great Roumanian actor, has written a play called "The Waters of Vacaresci," to satirise the frivolity of the drinkers of the stream. It seems that the Vacaresci spring is kept healthy, in some mysterious way, by the river Dambovitza. This fact, which is worth noting, was discovered in 1872, when the temporary deviation of the river from its regular bed, caused the spoiling of the mineral supply during that period. The baths of Balta-Alba, in the district of Romnicu-Sarat, are

greatly appreciated, the sulphurous mud on the margin of the lake being put into especial requisition. In effecting this cure, the patients are covered with a layer of mud, and exposed to the heat of the sun for a quarter of an hour, after which they are plunged into the water. Great irritation of the skin, and a burning sensation are produced by this means. This remedy is especially prized by sufferers from scrofula, rheumatism, paralysis, and neuralgia. Numbers of fossils turn up, from time to time, in the mountainous regions. The specimens already discovered include the shoulder of an elephant, elephants' teeth, mastodons' teeth, and the skull of a primeval bull.

Vegetation is most active in Roumania, and the soil is, as I have said, exceedingly fertile. Plum trees, pears and apricots, roses and raspberries, strawberries and flowers innumerable flourish in the highlands and increase their beauty tenfold. Among the mountains themselves we find the chestnut, the oak, the ash, the birch and spelt, in one degree; the pine, the fir and box in another; while a fine grass and the lichen crown the third. In the plains are the alder and the poplar, the elm and the hazel, the broom, so dear to the Plantagenet, the lime tree, and the acacia. Glorious crops of wheat

and maize, of barley, millet and oats, of hemp and flax and colza and rye, wave in the rustling breeze, and speak of wealth and plenty. Nor should the vine be forgotten, for it is everywhere to be seen, rejoicing alike the eye and the heart of man. Here, too, we perceive the cherry and the gooseberry. Everywhere smiling Nature and rich abundance. Only in the matter of flowers is Roumania a little in the rear. The excessive heat of the sun, and the coldness of the winters, are probably unfavourable to floral excellence and development.

The animal kingdom is not unworthily represented in Roumania, and it may even be said that savage beasts still haunt the more out-of-the-way regions. There are bears, and sometimes very big ones too, to be met with in the Carpathians. A hug from one of these is really no joke. Then you may come unawares upon a wild boar or a wolf, a jackal or a wild cat. There are foxes in plenty, as well as roes and hares. To the domestic animals, which are of the usual order, I shall refer later on. The principal birds are the eagle, the vulture, the raven, the flamingo, the heron, the crane, the bittern, the owl, the stork, the quail, the wild turkey, the woodcock, the coot, the gray partridge, the lark, the titlark, the nightingale, and the

thrush. Of domestic birds there are the goose, the turkey, the duck, the fowl, the pigeon, the crane, and the Guinea fowl.

There is a slightly muddy flavour about the fish caught in the interior and in the ponds of the low lands; but the mountain trout is not to be surpassed. As for the Danube fish, they are large and much esteemed, though I must confess that I found some kinds rather too fat for my taste. The chief of these are the lamprey, the perch, the pike, the salmon, the *Silurus glanus*, the carp, and the sturgeon, which last may be found as high up as Giurgiu, often as much as nine feet in length. The sturgeon is of course noted for its abundant caviar, which takes the place of oysters in this country.

The climate of Roumania, as I have already stated, is very trying, fiercely hot in summer, bitterly cold in winter. During the months of July and August, Bucharest becomes simply insupportable, and all who can run away lose not a moment in so doing. Here there is not the cooling sea breeze, which tempers the excessive heat in so pleasant a manner at Constantinople; and, indeed, throughout the plains in Wallachia and Moldavia, the atmosphere is almost tropical. The inhabitants divest themselves of all superfluous clothing, the

common people going about almost naked, while the upper classes appear in white holland suits and low muslin dresses. But the temperature is subject to frequent changes, and the deadly miasm which lurks in the very air one breathes, often exercises a most deleterious effect upon the constitution, enfeebled as it is by the enervating influence of the warm, oppressive weather. In the summer, thunderstorms are of constant occurrence, and are hailed with delight by suffering humanity. The first sign of an approaching storm is a blast of cold wind, which sweeps up the dust, and is soon followed by a perfect hurricane. In a few minutes the sky becomes obscured, and a flash of lightning is seen, followed by a loud clap of thunder at no distant interval. The thunderstorms are often very severe; but I have never heard that much mischief ensued therefrom. The autumn is usually the most agreeable season of the year. The temperature is then moderate, the weather magnificent. It sometimes lasts from the 1st of September, or thereabouts, right up to the middle of November. I well remember the autumn of 1872, which continued so long that many of the fruit trees blossomed again and bore a second edition of fruit. Such an event as this is, however, naturally very rare. When

winter comes upon you, there is no disguising the fact that you must soon prepare for the worst. It usually begins about the second week in November, when the wind blows from the north-east and the snow falls in immense quantities. These snow-falls are not unattended with risk, especially to the inhabitants of the more remote regions, who may be buried in their houses, their only egress being from the chimney in the roof. In 1875 a number of persons, who were overtaken in the fields by a fearful storm, were literally frozen up in the snow; and bands of wolves, to the number of several hundreds, broke into Bucharest itself, and worked much havoc there. Such *contretemps* are, however, happily very rare. The snow remains on the ground until the month of March, when it melts away. Usually this process is slow, for there is almost always frost at night during the first fortnight or so. Thus the water runs off by degrees, and little harm results. But sometimes the reverse is the case. There is a complete change in the weather, and the thaw continues during the night. Then streets and roads are transformed into river-beds, and it is often impossible to venture out on foot for days to come. The spring is usually very short, for the heat drives on apace, and you are thus precipitated from winter

frosts, almost without a moment's notice, into summer dust and drought. I have found it difficult to sleep at night, even during the first week in March, on account of the heat and closeness of the atmosphere. It rained ninety-one days and snowed sixteen days at Bucharest in 1871. There were seventy-two days of rain and nine of snow in 1872. In 1873 there were sixty days of rain and nine of snow. Of winds, the most trying is the north-east, which drives down from the Ural Mountains without encountering any obstacle. It is called in the country *crivetiu.* It is terribly icy, and brings the hurricanes and the snow, and tears down the trees. The south-west wind, on the other hand, named *austru*, is genial and pleasant. It is considered a rainy wind. At Bucharest, in 1871, the north-east wind blew 123⅔ days; in 1872 it blew 121 days; and in 1873, 117⅓ days. The *austru* blew at Bucharest 85⅓ days in 1871; 78⅓ days in 1872; and 74⅔ days in 1873.

The population of Roumania numbered in 1871 about five millions. Of these some 265,000 were Jews, while there were 230,000 Tzigans; 50,000 were Germans, and 50,000 *Ciangaï;* 41,000 Serbs and Bulgarians, and 36,000 Hungarians and Szeklers. The rest were Armenians, Russians, Greeks

and Albanians, French, English, and so on. It has been remarked that among the Moldo-Wallachians many more males are born than females, the average being 1,160 boys to 1,000 girls. Many of the children die young, owing doubtless to the severity of the climate and the prevailing malaria.

Roumania is divided into thirty-three districts or departments, and 164 *arrondissements*. Turnu-Severin is the chief town of the Méhédintii district. It has 4,000 inhabitants, and is one of the principal Danube ports. It was once upon a time the capital of Little Wallachia, and now possesses a dockyard for the repair of the Danube boats. In this town are to be traced the ruins of a Roman tower and the remains of a Roman bridge. In the district of Argès is the church of Argès, which has attained an European celebrity. This church was built in 1518, in the Byzantine style, and is of extreme beauty. Its exterior is of marble, carved with remarkable skill, not a single detail being omitted in the production of a marvellous *tout ensemble*. The church is built in the form of a square, after the manner of the Greek churches, and has a dome in the centre. There are four little towers of great elegance at the four corners of the monument, and two of them

seem about to fall one on the other. The illusion is produced by spiral bands which, encircling them from base to capital, make them look as if they were oblique, although they are in reality quite perpendicular. The walls of the interior are embellished with fresco paintings and gilded carvings. The name of the architect, Manoli, has been preserved in the popular legends, in which the Devil naturally plays a prominent part. Ploesti is the chief town of the district of Prahova. It is on the railroad, and contains 33,000 inhabitants. Its commerce is extensive, and it has important schools and a fine hospital.

Tirgovisti is the capital of the district of Dambovitza. It was once the metropolis of Wallachia, and was inhabited by Mircea, Vlad V., and Michael the Brave, all distinguished Voïvodes. Although situated in a beautiful country, Tirgovisti is now nothing but a mass of ruins. But the ancient palace of the sovereigns may still be traced, dilapidated walls and corridors being distinctly visible. One tower only survives to tell the tale of past grandeur and might. It is sixty feet in height, and thirty feet square at the base. It was in the month of March, 1690, that the Hospodar Constantine Brancovano abandoned Tirgovisti for

Bucharest, the boyards following his example. Charles XII. of Sweden, by the way, once stopped at Tirgovisti, where was found a sword of his inscribed *Carolus XII., Suevorum Rex.* Such is the fate of the neglected! Jassy, the capital of Moldavia, lies in the district of that name. It has 90,000 inhabitants, and is built on three hills. In it are a splendid palace, a university, colleges, forty-eight Greek churches, fifty-eight synagogues, a theatre, and six hospitals. The position of Jassy is charming, and it is less oriental in appearance than Bucharest. This town has been a princely residence since the year 1529. It is supposed to be the same as the ancient *Municipium Iassorum*, founded by the Iassi among the colonies which Trajan established in Dacia. A writer thus wittily describes the aspect of the city. "Jassy," says he, "reminds me of a young officer who, when the Moldo-Wallachian militia was formed, stood proudly in front of the lines, his cap on his head, a *pelisse* over his uniform, and Turkish slippers outside his spurred boots." Calarash is the chief town of the district of Jalomitia; Caracalla that of Romanatii; while Turnu-Magurelle, with its 5,000 inhabitants, is a port, and the principal town of Teleorman. Gallati, or Galatz, is the most important port on the Danube, the big steamers

from the Black Sea having free intercourse with it, save in the very depth of winter. It has 80,000 inhabitants, and is a most cosmopolitan place. Galatz is also the head-quarters of the Danube Commissioners, while its corn trade is too well known to need more than a passing mention here. It also possesses a college, and several schools and factories. It is the Moldavian port, and boasts a beautiful view. Braïla, the Wallachian port, ranks next to Galatz, and has 28,000 inhabitants. It is also famous for its corn trade. Braïla was long in the hands of the Turks, but it has taken a new lease of life.

The country is well supplied in the matter of roads, and now possesses a very fair system of railways. First of all, there is the line from Giurgiu to Bucharest, and thence to Ploesti, which will in a short time be carried up to Cronstadt, or Brasiov, as it is called by the natives. Another line runs from Ploesti to Buzeu, Braïla and Galatz, whence it proceeds to Cernanti, Cernovitz, and so on to Lemberg, in Galicia. This line has several branches, one of which leads to Jassy. Since the beginning of the war other lines have been constructed in this locality. The third great line connects Bucharest with Pitesci, Slatina and Craïova, and continues its

course until it reaches Turnu-Severin and Verciorova, on the Austrian frontier. Most of the travellers to the West prefer the Danube boats; but in the winter, when the river is closed to navigation, the usual route is *viâ* Ploesti and Cernovitz to Lemberg, thence to Cracow, and so on to Vienna, a very long and arduous *détour*. The *diligence* can also be taken from Ploesti to Cronstadt, where the railway breaks off; and then from Cronstadt, again by rail, to Buda-Pesth. But it is not everyone who relishes a journey across the Carpathians, which are always cold enough, in the very depth of winter. As for the highroads, those that I have personally inspected are really admirable, and I believe that both Wallachia and Moldavia are very well off in this respect. Some of these are kept up by the inhabitants of the different *arrondissements;* others, partly by the inhabitants, partly by the State. One great item of expenditure is the amount of bridges which have to be provided for. Their name is Legion in this country, owing to the innumerable meanderings and twistings of rivers and streams. Another source of outlay is to be met with in the mountains, where solid blocks of masonry have often to be placed near the roads, in order to prevent the ground from slipping. I was much astonished at the elaborateness

of this work, which would be creditable to any land. What with bridges and walls, the Roumanians certainly have a good deal to pay. There are no canals in this country, the Danube, the Pruth, the Sereth, and the Bistritia being the only waters used for traffic. The river Jiu has been rendered navigable up to Craïova, and attempts are still being made to improve it higher up.

The Post-office department is carefully administered, and the telegraph has been in use since the year 1854. Upwards of 1,089 persons are employed in these services. In the matter of weights and measures, the Roumanians have adopted the French methods, which will become obligatory in the year 1880. Until that date, however, we still hear of *ocas* and *litras*, *stengènes* and *palmacs*, *rupus* and *greuls*. The different styles of computation, together with the discrepancy between the various coins in circulation in this country, often lead to much confusion. The Roumanians have a gold coin worth twenty francs, silver coins worth two francs, one franc, and one half franc, and ten and five *bani* (*centimes*) copper coins. But these have not prevented the introduction of foreign coins of all sorts and sizes. There are the Turkish *lira*, the French napoleon, the Austrian ducat, the

Russian rouble, and any amount of French, Russian and Austrian silver. Some of the tradespeople ought to reap a rich harvest out of this Babel, as they always make your money out to be worth very little and their own worth very much. This is perhaps only human nature, but it is sometimes rather trying to the temper for all that.

CHAPTER X.

AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE.

THE soil of Roumania may be classified under three distinct heads. The first is that of the mountains, which, starting from Orsova, on the Danube, form the northern frontier of the country, extending to the borders of Galicia. In this division are the districts of Argès, Dambovitza, Buzeu, Prahova, and others. It is almost exclusively composed of forests and pasture-lands; but in places the characteristics of the other divisions may also be found. The second head is that of the undulating hills, which, joining the bases of the mountains, connect them with the level ground. This division, which is devoted to the culture of the fruit-tree and the vine, comprises Jassy, Roman, Oltu, Tutova, Falciu and other districts. In the third category come the districts of Ismaïl, Bolgrad, Braïla, Ilfov, Jalomitia, Romanatii, Teleorman, and others. These are the regions of the plain, and in these cereals and vegetables are principally cultivated. The inhabitants of the mountain-lands are few in number. They

cut down the trees, hunt, and look after the flocks and herds which, during the summer months, are everywhere to be met with. It is sometimes so dry and hot that the grass will not grow, and the drought becomes intense. The spring and autumn rains are therefore of immense importance. Maize and the vine thrive wonderfully in Roumania, and even the fig-tree and the almond bear in the open air under favourable conditions. The soil is extremely fertile, so fertile, indeed, that it is almost impossible to come across a piece of hopelessly barren ground. Very rarely is it necessary to use any manure, which the peasants do not often know how to get rid of. It may be said that manure is valuable everywhere. This I admit; but still the fact that the farmers have not yet learned how to profit by it proves that their land gets on tolerably well without it. The overflowings of the rivers are not, like those of the Nile, conducive to agricultural prosperity, as they usually occur rather late in the season, when the crops, already advanced, are liable to be much damaged. For this reason the Government have been at great pains to improve the river banks, in order to prevent a recurrence of such mishaps. The crops are, as it is, subject to sufficient *contretemps*. Hail, fire, cold, and insects often

prove a veritable scourge. And here, as in Hungary, a season of drought will ruin the farmer's prospects for a whole year, perhaps to be followed by another in the coming twelvemonth. The crops are usually sown according to a fixed rule; maize one year, wheat the next, and lie fallow the third. Sometimes, however, they lie fallow three years, and the cattle are turned in to feed. In other cases, when the land is remarkably good, cereals succeed each other in one unbroken link, comprising wheat, oats, barley, millet, and maize. Peas and beans are also cultivated on some estates, wheat being always sown afterwards. Other crops are flax, hemp, colza, and tobacco. The culture of cotton has even been attempted with a certain amount of success. It has not become general because it is liable to be ruined by the autumn rains. Most of the plants grown in other countries have been introduced into Roumania, and many of them are now being tested in the agricultural establishment at Panteleimon. Maize is the crop most cultivated in Moldo-Wallachia. The average produce is 15,417,129 *hectolitres* to 10,379,652 of corn and 3,657,687 of barley. Maize usually fetches about 6 francs per *hectolitre*, but at the ports it rises to 10 francs. It sold at as high a

rate as 13 francs 75 centimes per *hectolitre* in the interior of the country in the year 1874. Corn sells at from 13 to 20 francs in the ports; rye from 8 to 11 francs; and barley from 6 to 7 francs per *hectolitre.* No less than ninety kinds of corn have been tried; but the most esteemed are the *ghirca*, the *cârnau*, *arnaut*, *Banat*, *colouze*, and *Sandomir.* The ordinary corn of Roumania is very productive, and has a good average weight. Upwards of 1,280,946 francs' worth of flour was exported from Roumania during the year 1872.

In Moldo-Wallachia 3,023,078 *hectares* of land are devoted to the cultivation of cereals; 2,544,214 *hectares* are prairies *au naturel;* on 182,197 *hectares* vegetables are grown; while the vine claims 102,084 *hectares.* The value of the ground is estimated at 2,265 millions of francs, the revenue amounting to 100 million francs, at the smallest computation. The native population of Moldo-Wallachia being exclusively military and agricultural, it follows that the people lead quite a country life. It is with extreme difficulty that the peasant is to be torn from his village, even for a time, and he will lose no chance of returning to it on the first opportunity. There are a great many farmers; but the leases are so short, lasting only from three to five years, that

they are rarely tempted to undertake really useful improvements. On the contrary, their great study seems to be how to get as much as possible out of the land while they hold it—a very pernicious doctrine, I need hardly remark. They are not always in a position to employ regular labour, so the peasants take portions of the property off their hands for a time, and pay them back so much, when the harvest is gathered in, according to previous agreement; sometimes a third, sometimes a quarter, sometimes a fifth. This is a capital arrangement. It leaves the peasant free and independent to act as he will, and at the same time stimulates him to active and careful exertion. The Rural Law of 1864 conferred another great boon on the peasantry. Lots varying from three to six *hectares* were portioned out among the State property, and given to peasant proprietors for a fixed indemnity. No less than 600,000 families thus became landowners. Many of them also took to farming neighbouring plots of ground, according to the system mentioned above. In some districts the peasant proprietors club together and farm a large estate, each paying his share of the expenses in proportion to the extent which he cultivates and the number of animals in his possession. Another advantage is

that the peasants are thus enabled to buy expensive machines and implements, which, but for this plan, would be far beyond their reach. The owners of flocks, in like manner, often pay their shepherds in kind, and they share in the butter and milk and cheese. Thus they learn to take an interest in the whole thing, which they would not do were they simple hirelings. Their masters' prosperity is their own, and their carelessness and inattention are visited upon their own heads. Were the rural population larger, Roumania would be in a position to export far more corn than it can now do. The labourers are few, and Transylvanians and Bulgarians are always in great demand. What Moldo-Wallachia needs is a more numerous native peasantry. The peasants are all very well as far as they go—I think that I have already given them a very good character—but there is not enough of them. And this unhappy war has robbed the country of many a stout pair of hands which will not be replaced for the next fifty years. Poor peasant of Wallachia and Moldavia, yours has been a strange and a hard lot for centuries! When will it be improved? I fear never, unless the Millennium itself intervene to rescue you. The slave of friend and foe alike, you have never known repose. But

contentment has always been your motto, and your cheery heart has robbed even such misery as yours of more than half its sting!

There is a Minister of Agriculture, Commerce, and Public Works, with a special department for agriculture, organised by M. Aurelian in 1863. A capital school at Ferestreu, near Bucharest, trains many a young farmer and horticulturist, and contains a model farm, a museum, gardens of various kinds, and the like. It has sixty pupils. There are also other schools and valuable institutions in different parts of the country.

Maize forms the staple food of the lower classes. Every day a portion is boiled for the use of the family. It is called *mamaliga*, and is usually eaten alone; a little milk or a piece of salt fish being, however, sometimes added. Hemp is also much cultivated, and the women busy themselves in preparing it for use. They are adroit spinners. The convents also distinguish themselves in this branch of industry. Canvas is, besides, fabricated in considerable quantities. Colza is largely grown, the yearly produce amounting to 270,000 *hectolitres;* 11,017,495 francs' worth was exported in 1871. Tobacco used to be widely cultivated, but the monopoly established in 1872 dealt a fatal blow at this

trade, which diminishes every day. At one time the tobacco plant was brought to great perfection, and was much esteemed, not only in the country but abroad. 429,136 francs' worth was exported in 1868: now the export is *nil.* The principal kinds were *Gaiesci Bila* and *Husii.*

Of vegetables the chief are beans, cabbages, onions, garlic, melons, and cucumbers. These are in great requisition, as they form, with the *mamaliga*, the principal nourishment of the peasantry, who only eat meat on grand occasions. The vegetables are generally half cooked, and many are salted for home consumption. Green fruit is also in much demand. The rural population rarely touch the potato, which is almost exclusively patronised by the inhabitants of the towns. Plums are much used in the making of a spirit called *tsouica*, which is greatly relished by the lower classes. They are grown in the hills, where there are extensive plantations of plum-trees. The spirit is distilled in the winter. Brandy is also procured from grain and the potato. In 1866, 130,386 *hectolitres* were made from plums, and 33,744 from grain. In 1868, 19,428 *hectolitres* were made from plums, and 101,551 from grain. I cannot say to which side the balance now inclines.

The vine is grown most extensively at Cotnari, in the district of Jassy; at Dragasiani, in Valcea; at Dealu-Mare, in Prahova; and Odobesci, in Putna. Other famous vineyards are those of Nicoresci, Greci, Draganesci, Pitesci, Socola, Vacaresci, and Orevitia. The grapes are, as a rule, luscious and of admirable flavour; though, if more attention were paid to this department, the result would be even more satisfactory. The principal white wines are those of Cotnari and Dragasiani; the best red wines the Odobesci and the Dealu-Mare. The Themaiossa, a dry white wine made from the muscatel, is much esteemed by *connoisseurs*. Absinthe is sometimes mixed with the wine; to which it imparts a peculiar flavour. Alcohol and vinegar owe their existence to certain wines. Wines are annually exported into Turkey and Austria, 146,667 francs' worth being sent out of the country in 1872. In that year 1,037,436 *hectolitres* of wine were produced. Every year the growth of the vine and the quality of the wines ought to improve steadily.

The woods and forests which used to cover Roumania are now fast disappearing, they having been dealt with in the most reckless and improvident manner. Every day wood is exported which

should never have been cut down, and the consequences must soon prove very disastrous. There are actually as many as 608 sawing establishments at the foot of the Carpathian range, and the number is increasing. Upwards of 1,752,852 francs' worth of wood was exported in 1872. Cart after cart, laden with timber, finds its way into the towns, coal being rarely used. The rivers and larger streams float enormous quantities down to some more frequented spot. So the land is becoming bare and treeless, and great inconvenience will be felt before many years have passed.

Of domestic animals the principal are the horse, the cow, the buffalo, the ass, the mule, the sheep, the goat, and the pig. Formerly the horses of Moldavia were in great request. Now, however, they have sadly degenerated. They are terribly undersized, poor to look at, and, though capable of enduring a certain amount of fatigue, quite inadequate to draw a heavy load. More attention is, however, bestowed on the subject than was the case some years ago. New blood has been introduced into the breed; and it is to be hoped that there will ere long be a decided change for the better. It is ridiculous to see a dozen or fifteen horses harnessed to a single *diligence*. Anyone who wants a decent

animal has either to import it, or to submit to be fleeced by a South Russian Jew. There is absolutely no alternative. The imports come from Russia and Austria, the exports are sent to Turkey and Austria; 1,254,090 francs' worth of horseflesh was imported in 1867, and 675,837 francs' worth in 1872. The exports in 1868 amounted to 1,556,100 francs, and in 1872 to 619,958 francs. There were in 1860, 506,104 horses in Roumania; in 1873, their number had dwindled down to 426,859. Asses and mules are but little used in the country, being chiefly reared for exportation, the former into Austria and Russia, the latter into Turkey. The small horses are quite diminutive enough for every necessity. The cows are not much to boast of; but every peasant has at least one, as their milk is much prized, and money is made by breeding. Some of the farmers have herds of oxen and cows numbering 2,000. In the summer they roam about; in the winter they are carefully lodged in the stable or *cosiar*. As for the oxen, they are fattened when no longer of any use, and are then taken to the towns to be killed and eaten. A great deal of meat is salted and dried; it is called *pastrama*. The finest cattle are to be found in the northern plains of Moldavia, where

they are cared for best. All the herds wander about at their pleasure, pieces of ground, called *izlaz* or *imache*, being reserved for their especial use. But I regret to say that the number of these animals is fast diminishing. In 1860, Roumania possessed 2,751,168 head of horned cattle; in 1873, it had only 1,886,990 head. This is doubtless due to the impulse which has been given of late years to the cultivation of the soil. Still it is to be deplored. There were in Roumania, in 1868, 91,079 buffaloes; in 1873, there were but 44,204. The buffalo is much esteemed in this country, though, as has been seen, it has gone down with the other cattle, as far, at least, as numbers are concerned. It is well acclimatised in this land, and is capable of a vast amount of work. But it has to be carefully treated, and must have a bath at least once a day during the summer months, as it is very sensible to heat. The buffalo is stronger than the ox, and the female yields excellent milk. The buffalo is peculiar to Wallachia, scarcely one being seen in Moldavia. Camels have been imported into Roumania, and are employed in field-work in several districts, notably in Jalomitia, Buzeu, and Bolgrad. It is not thought, however, that they will ever come to much here.

Sheep do not give much trouble to the farmer, but they are, at the same time, a profitable source of revenue. They are bred not only by the principal proprietors, but also by the peasants themselves, many of whom have flocks containing hundreds of these useful animals. They supply wool, milk, and meat. The sheep are kept like the larger cattle, pasturing in the mountains during the summer months, and in the plains in winter, during which season they are also sometimes placed under cover in the stable, taking their food, however, always in the open air. There are several kinds of sheep in Roumania: the *merinos*, which are very scarce; the *tsigaïes*, white or black, with a fine wool; the *stogoches*, with common wool; and the *tsurcanes*, with long and thick wool. In north Moldavia there is a peculiar breed with gray wool, called *fumurie*, and another breed, called *tonca*, is to be found in the plains of Bessarabia. The plan has lately been adopted, of crossing the *tsigaïes* with the *merinos*, and the result is stated to have been highly satisfactory. The consumption of the lambs is very large in the spring, thousands being brought to the towns to be eaten at the Easter festival. They are killed too young, at a time when they are scarcely anything but skin and bone. As for the skins of

the lambs, they are much prized, as from them the fur caps worn in winter are to be made. In the old days of the Phanariotes, the enormous fur hats called *ichelik* were exclusively made from the skins of gray lambs, which were taken before they were born from the bodies of their dead mothers. To the sheep-skins, so much patronised by the peasantry of both sexes, I have already alluded. Whitened by a peculiar preparation, they are embroidered outside; the collar, sleeves, and back being especially adorned. The usual forms of these sheep-skins are the great-coat (*cojok*), the vest (*mintean* or *cojocel*), and the waistcoat, which is without sleeves and buttons at the side (*peptar*). The districts of Campulung, Tirgovisti, Pitesci, Suciava, and Piatra are renowned for this industry. The sheep are shorn in June, and a great portion of the wool is exported into Transylvania and the Bukovine, whence it returns, all manufactured, to the country at a later date. A good deal of the rest is also sent abroad, for direct exportation, never to come back. The peasant women work much at the weaving of carpets or rugs, for I hardly know how to designate them. They are very pretty, are covered with tasteful ornaments, and are used to place over the bed, to hang on the walls as curtains, and to cover

the floors on grand occasions. The convents, and the villages of the districts of Jalomitia, Buzeu, Muscel, and Covurliu have acquired a well-deserved celebrity in this department of trade. Besides these, the peasantry weave all their own clothing, black veils, or *camilafques;* flannels, or *muhaer;* cloths, or *chaïac;* thick cloths, or *aba* or *dimié;* girdles, or *briu;* streamers, or *betté;* petticoats, or *valnic*, also called *catrintia;* and aprons, *fota*, *pestelca*, or *zevelca*. The common people are thus well and warmly clad in the national style. But, alas for the picturesque! English importations are already making their way into the larger towns, and soon the handsome shepherd of the mountains will be reduced to the level, in outward appearance at least, of the London cad or the Birmingham rough. The total number of sheep in Moldo-Wallachia in 1860 was 4,819,900; in 1873, it was 4,786,317. Of goats there were 423,077 head in 1860, and 194,188 in 1873. They are mostly to be met with in the mountains, more particularly in the districts of Méhédintii, Argès, Gorjiu, and Doljiu. Some of these are Angora goats, which get on very well in this climate. The goats, like the sheep, give scarcely any trouble, and their milk is much enjoyed by the rural populations. Their

skins are also in great requisition, and are used for the fabrication of stuffs called *prèche* or *arare*, which are employed in the *carrutzas*, or waggons, and also as bags and havresacs, and to shield from cold the buffaloes, oxen, and horses. There are everywhere throughout Roumania weavers of *prèches*, which sell at the rate of two francs per *mètre*.

Pigs are not perhaps quite as plentiful here as in Servia, but every peasant possesses a few. There are several kinds, the chief being the Mongolian and the Serb. One breed is exclusively distributed among the Danube islands. In the summer the pigs run wild in the forests; but in the winter they are kept in the farms, and are well fattened with maize. They are especially partial to the oak forests, where they pick up acorns by the bushel. In the mountains, too, they are always to be found. The pigs are also fed on beech-nuts and fern-roots. The pigs, like the other animals, have suffered from the effects of an increased attention to the cultivation of the soil. Their number, in 1863, amounted to 1,088,737; in 1873, there were only 836,944 of them.

Silkworms are not neglected in this country, the peasant-women devoting a certain proportion of

their leisure to their rearing. The mulberry-tree thrives in Roumania, even extending as far as the mountains. But only an amount of silk sufficient for the requirements of each individual family is prepared, the housewife occupying herself solely with the fabrication of the holiday skirts, called *iés* and *camessi*, and of the veils, *maramés*, with which she loves to adorn herself. This industry might easily attain a wider range, and it is not improbable that this may be the case one of these fine days.

The fisheries form an important branch of commerce. I have already alluded to the *baltas*, or marshy lakes formed by the Danube on the Roumanian bank. Round these *baltas* are ranged numbers of villages, the inhabitants of which are fishers by trade. It is in the spring and in the autumn, when the waters are low, that these men are particularly active, building dykes at the mouths of the *baltas*, and thus catching their prey in a regular trap. They make use of the harpoon for the larger sorts, and of the net, *navod*, for the smaller. This occupation is often highly remunerative. Another rich field is presented by the Black Sea, the sturgeon of which have always been renowned. These fish are found in large quantities, and their roe, the famous *caviar*, is a very important article of commerce.

The inhabitants of the island of Vilcov smoke and salt the fish, after extracting the insides, and, under the name of *batog*, it finds its way into many a Russian town. The salting of fish is very common in Roumania, as much is consumed throughout the country, the fast-days being exceedingly numerous. In the spring two shoals of herrings make their appearance up the Danube as far as Giurgiu, and are much prized. 7,400,000 francs' worth of fish, both fresh and salted, is annually sold in Roumania. In 1872, the export of fish amounted to 1,273,800 francs. I should not forget to mention the trade in leeches, which abound in nearly all the marshes. These are largely exported.

In Roumania there are very few manufacturing establishments, and these are almost entirely in the hands of foreigners. The genius of the people is not adapted to work of this kind. It may be, however, that the superior trade of the neighbouring countries has stifled the rising aspirations of the Moldo-Wallachian *industriels*, and that, with more advantages about them, they may some day prove themselves fully equal to the occasion. There is an arsenal, and there are salt mines, mills, factories, distilleries, tanneries, soap and candle factories, breweries, and so on; but I cannot point to any-

thing which I might fairly designate a manufactory, in the proper sense of the word.

I have already given some account of the petroleum *exploitation;* I have therefore only to conclude this chapter with a short notice of the salt-mines. From the earliest times Roumania has been celebrated for its rich stores of salt, and its salt-mines have always been a subject of special solicitude. The mines which yield the most at present are those of Ocna, in Bacau; Slanic and Telega, in Prahova; and Ocnele-Mari, in Valcea. Formerly these mines were worked like the petroleum wells. Since 1845, however, a better method has been adopted. Galleries are hollowed out, kept together by pillars, which are cut round, and thus the supply is now far more abundant. The mines are from 40 to 105 *mètres* in depth, while the length of the galleries, which lead from mine to mine, ranges from 70 to 100 *mètres.* Enormous blocks of salt are first extracted, and are then subdivided into others about a third of their size. Steam is beginning to be used in these operations. In 1860, there were 1071 workmen employed, 791 of whom were free, while the remaining 280 were condemned. In 1873, there were 1829 workmen. There is, as I have said, no such thing as capital punishment. Mur-

derers and other grave offenders are draughted off to the salt-mines and there incarcerated. Formerly they were compelled to live there night and day, and the consequences proved most disastrous to their constitutions, usually terminating fatally at the end of four years or thereabouts. Now, however, the criminals only live in the mines during the day, like the other labourers, and their general health is excellent. The *employés* are entirely beyond the reach of cholera and other virulent epidemics, and scrofula is a thing unknown. The amount of salt extracted in 1873, was as much as 83,000,000 *kilogrammes;* while the quantity exported in the same year was 29,570,000 *kilogrammes.* The State, which is the sole *exploiteur* of this industry, realised in 1873 a clear profit of 2,556,401 francs.

CHAPTER XI.

ORIGIN OF THE PEOPLE; LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE; EDUCATION.

THE Roumanian claims to be the direct descendant of the legionaries and other colonists who were transported into Dacia by Trajan after his conquest of that province. This assumption he bases more particularly on his language, which is undoubtedly of Latin origin. In this theory he is, as a rule, supported by French authors of works on the country, who are anxious to prove that they have cousins on the Lower Danube. The Emperor Napoleon III. was a great patron of this doctrine. The Germans, on the other hand, persist in denying and ridiculing the Italian origin of the Roumanian race, which is, in their opinion, as a rule, eminently Slavonic. The conclusion at which I have arrived, after much study and reflection, is that both sides are equally right and wrong, and that the Roumanians are a very mixed family. The Dacians were the aboriginal inhabitants of Moldo-Wallachia; their country comprising, besides it, Transylvania,

the Bukovine, Bessarabia, and the Banate of Temesvar. Long did this warlike nation harass the Roman settlers on its frontier, even exacting the payment of a tribute from time to time. But the ambition of the king Decebalus proved the ruin of his subjects. Worsted by Trajan in several sanguinary engagements, he beheld the destruction of his inheritance, which passed under the Roman sceptre, and Trajan's triumphal column was long one of the most prominent ornaments of the Forum. That Emperor devoted himself to the promotion of the welfare of the new province, which soon took a high rank and became a very model of civilization. Colonists were sent to repopulate a country which had suffered considerably from the horrors of war, and soon Dacian and Roman intermingled their blood, and begat a sterling race. Bridges were built across the Danube; and military roads were constructed, the principal of which, still called *Drumu Trajan*, led from the Iron Gates to the town of Bender itself. The capital, Sarmisægethusa, which then took the name of Ulpia-Trajana, was the residence of the Proprætor; and in it palaces, temples and baths innumerable were to be found. Traces of these are still visible in the village of Varhély, which is built on the site of the ancient

city. Happy days were these, days always fondly cherished in the memories of the later inhabitants. But the Goths came upon the scene and dispersed the colony, which scattered in many directions. Some of the Daco-Romans fled into Mœsia, the modern Bulgaria; others emigrated still further, to Macedonia, Thrace, and the Adriatic, where they are now known as *Cotzo-vlachi* or *Tsintsares*. The arrival of the Huns drove away the Goths in turn, but did not improve matters; and after them came the Gepidæ, who were followed by the Slavic or Sarmatian tribes, comprising the Serbs, the Chrowats or Croats, and the Wallacks, the last of whom occupied Wallachia and Moldavia in the fourteenth century. As affairs began to mend, Radu Negru and Bogdan, descending from the mountain fastnesses of Transylvania, entered the plains and founded the provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia, of which they were Voïvodes, or dukes. But, as must be admitted, the people who composed the two principalities can scarcely have been what would be designated as a pure race. Each tribe which passed over the country left a certain number of settlers behind it, and thus the Roumanian, *pro-prement dit*, cannot help being a combination of various elements. This much I will admit, that

the Daco-Roman possessed a remarkable power of assimilating foreign factors, and combining them in one complete whole, a faculty with which his descendants are still justly credited. The Servians and Bulgarians who make Roumania their home soon lose their peculiar characteristics, and, adopting the popular language and costume, become roumanized in a very short time. I conceive, however, that it would be the height of absurdity to point to the Roumanians as an unmixed Italian family. Rather let us conclude that, somehow or another, the Daco-Romans, being the more numerous and energetic, always continued to lend a special tone of their own to each successive tribe of immigrants as it appeared among them, the operation being completed in each separate race before a new one crossed the Pruth. The work was thus a gradual one; and, even if the Daco-Roman factor only comprised, at the end, one-third of the whole number, the result would be thoroughly in accordance with the strictest rules of probability. A similar process has been demonstrated in the case of the slavonised Bulgarians, who are not of Slavonic, but Ugrian origin, and are thus akin to the Magyars, who are now their most deadly enemies. History is replete with phenomena of this description, and it is usually dangerous to

venture upon too much assertion. It is certain that the Slavonic tongue was used for about two hundred years in the public offices and churches of Moldo-Wallachia, and that the Cyrillian letters have only been out of fashion some ten years or so. Surely this fact points to a curious Slavonic preponderance in the two principalities at one period of their annals, a preponderance strangely synchronous with the arrival of the Wallack tribe. Be this as it may, the earlier history of the Roumanians is a complete puzzle, and it is more profitable to avoid dabbling in vain disputations. I have traced the people to their earliest source, and have explained the various elements of which they are composed. Their history only really begins with the foundation of the two *Voïvodschaften*. All that precedes it is useless for practical purposes, and I shall therefore leave it to the reader to maintain his favourite theory, without any opposition or interference on my part. This is, as Lord Dundreary would say, one of those things which no fellow can understand.

The Roumanian language is a branch of the Romance family, which comprises the French, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese. The groundwork is exclusively Latin, as that of the English is Saxon; but, like our own tongue, it has been

enriched with many words derived from foreign sources. Numerous words of Slavonic, Turkish, and Greek origin may be found therein, not to mention others directly obtained or adapted from the French. It is a pretty language, bearing a singular resemblance to the Italian, though it is not quite as soft and harmonious as that tongue. The Roumanian is, of course, more analytic than the Latin; but it is far more synthetic than the other Romance branches. It is spoken in every place where a Roumanian is to be found. I must confess, however, that there are certain distinctions and dialects; the Roumanian of the Bessarabian having been affected to a certain extent by the Russian; while in the Banate and the Bukovine it has undergone a German, and in Transylvania, a Hungarian, influence. The principle, however, remains the same in all cases, and the Roumanian inhabitants of the different provinces can converse easily with each other.

I have spoken of the Cyrillian alphabet, which was introduced into the country by Gregory Zamblic, Metropolitan of Moldavia, after the Council of Florence. Whatever the faults of the system, the pronunciation of the ninth century has alone been retained by these means, and at the present moment

no two authors arrange their Roman letters alike, and confusion reigns supreme. A translation of the Gospels was, however, published in Transylvania, in Roman characters, in 1580; and in 1643 Racoczy, the Voïvode of that country, had the Roumanian Bible printed in the old type in the Calvinistic establishment at Belgrade.

A few remarks on the nature and termination of the Roumanian words may be interesting. In the Roumanian language, *limba romana* or *romanesca*, some are exactly the same as in Latin; for example, *cântare*, *crescere*, *ducere*, *dicere*, *facere*, *laudare*, *venire*, *cernere*, *perire*, *barba*, *cornu*, *furca*, and so on. Others are formed from the ablatives of Latin substantives, as *lege;* others from the same source, slightly altered, as *dinte*, *cale*, *bunìtate*. In some words, though changed, there is a strength which is lacking to other Romance dialects, as *frigu*, *locu*, *lacu*, *degetu*, *flore;* while in others, such as *ochi* and *chiamare*, there is a great resemblance to the Italian. The letter *u* is often in use, when in the Italian it would be an *o*, at the end of the substantive, as *lupu*, *ursu*, which, like the Italian, have the plurals *lupi* and *ursi*. Words like *quine*, *quisne; quineva*, *quisnam; nemine*, *altŭ*, *atôt*, *multŭ*, and *totŭ*, need no explanation. Among the pronouns in use are *iel*, *iea*, *ia*, or

ea, the Latin *ille*, *illa*, and *ea*. From *ille* and *illum* we have *îl*, *le*, and *lu*, which are used in a peculiar way. Thus they say *îl conoscŭ*, I know him; *omulŭ*, the man; *femeile*, the woman; *le am dat*, I have given it them; and *ömen-ii* and *feme-ile*, for those men and those women. The following is the present tense of *dormire*, to sleep. *Dormŭ*, *dormĭ*, *dorme*, *dormimŭ*, *dormiţ'ĭ*, *dorm*. Other common words worth knowing are *ieŭ*, I; *tu*, thou; *noĭ*, we; *voĭ*, you; *da*, yes; *nu*, no; *bine*, well; *unde*, whence; *quând*, when; *între*, among; *a*, to; *in*, in; *caldŭ*, warm; and *lorŭ*, of them.

I shall select one or two pieces, which will give the reader some idea of the language. The following is from Héliade, a Roumanian author of great renown:—

"Simbol al libertàt'i quere esce Cristos!
Frumos escĭ tu in ochi 'mĭ, falnic fâlfâi in vênturĭ
S'i quât cinstesc norodul quare asta d'i te nalt'à!
S'i sfânt' mĭ e aquel sâŭge cu quare t' aŭ udat,
S'i ast fel còtre ceruri de verde aĭ crescut."

"Symbol of the liberty which is Christ!
Fair art thou to my eyes, when thou floatest proudly in the gale.
How I esteem the people that unfurls thee to-day!
Sacred to me is the blood with which it has watered thee,
For towards Heaven it makes thee more to grow."

The following is from the pen of Nicolas Vacaresco:—

"Oltul'e, Oltul' eçule,
Secart'iar pîraíele,
Sè crësca dudaíele,
Se trec cu piciörele.
Oltule! rîu blestemat,
Que vii as'a turburat?
Que te reped'i ca un smeu
S'i'mî opresci pe Niçu meu?
Scâmbat'î, scâmbat'î apele
Slàbesce 't'î vôrtejele
Sé t'î vîd petricelele,
Sè le spele piciörele.
Iacà Neica! Nu e Neica!
Quà d'arfi venind Neicuça
L'ar fi cunoscut leicuça.
Quine vine nu e Neica.
Ventule dute de i spune
Quà zàbàvîle î nu's bune
Quà florica i duce duru,
S'i 'ia înt'elenit ogoru."

The interpretation of which is:—

"Oltu, gentle Oltu!
Dry up thy torrents,
That the brushwood may grow there,
So that I may pass on foot.
Oltu! cruel river,
Why comest thou so troubled?
Why dost thou rush like a dragon
And keep from me my Nice?
Change, change thy waters,
Calm thy whirlwinds,
That I may see thy pebbles,
That thy daughters may pass.
Here is Nice! No. It is not Nice!
If little Nice came,
Her sister would recognise her.
Who comes is not Nice.

Go, wind, and tell her
That her delay is not good,
That Florica is grieved,
And that her field lies fallow."

Héliade, for twenty years a professor in the College at Bucharest, and a great patriot, is the chief of the modern Roumanian writers. He was particularly distinguished for his share in the movement of 1848, and his whole life was a sacrifice to the literature and liberties of his native country. His "Ode to the Emperor Nicholas on the Peace of Adrianople," his "Ruins of Tirgovisti," and his "Cherubin and Seraphin" are fine pieces of poetry, and worthy of a place in any literature.

He thus describes the condition of the Roumanian under the rule of the Phanar:—

"The Roumanian had become the prey of luxury; the arms which, for centuries, had defended this country, had grown effeminate in this long quarrel, and the weapons had lost their brilliancy, about which Liberty herself had thrown a peculiar halo. Extinguished because they had shone too much, devoured by rust, the instruments of perfidy, they only strengthened the hand of the stranger, and the native himself became a foreigner and a vagrant. Ah! let us consign to oblivion those who vied with each other in evil deeds—here they are! passing,

they have passed on—like the hours of the night—like their own memory."

Wandering amid the ruins of the past, Héliade perceives rising dimly before him the shades of the Roumanian heroes of Campulung, of Argès, of Jassy and Bucharest, of all, in fine, who from the times of Trajan and Rudolph the Black, fell victims to their courage and to the duty which they owed to their own land:—

"Hence," says he, "echo causes to resound far beyond the Carpathians the name of Rudolph the Black. The warrior plants his throne on this spot. The Roumanians surround it, and press about his standard—defending their mother-country with the arms and the hearts of Roumanians.

"At the head of his army roars Mârcea—Mârcea valiant in fight. He breathes courage into the hearts of his Roumanian soldiers. The conqueror of Murad, he brings his pride low; and the land is free from the Ister to the Carpathians.

"The Balkan sees at its feet the sons of the Crescent—beaten, flying, seeking a refuge there; and the Danube is witness that the Roumanians then deserved a crown of *immortelles*."

Another promising poet and patriot was Cârlova, who followed in the school of Héliade. At a very

early age he wrote verses of great merit, and he was barely twenty years old when his "War March" inspired the hearts of his fellow-citizens. Scarcely, however, had he written these lines, when he was doomed to an early grave, and died at twenty-two. He thus appeals to his fellow-countrymen to awake from the lethargy to which they had so long been subject:—

"Children, Heaven has opened out to you a glorious career. Remember, children, that all Europe watches you in the contest upon which you are about to enter. Rouse yourselves at the cry of your mother-country, which says to you, in thundering tones: 'Trample underfoot disgraceful idleness, rise and shake hands! Long have you all been humiliated; long have you slept soundly in the arms of effeminacy; whether you will or no, you must leave it, you must be free. See! Glory seems to smile on you. Run, fly to arms! The eagle has just taken flight; with his wing he signals to you, and says that from this date you may dare to honour yourselves with the title of nation .... Yes, in this sacred path you will face all dangers, and Victory will attend your steps if with one voice you sing, 'Glory, Love, Union!'"

Alexandresco, the La Fontaine of Wallachia,

pointed in his fables many morals which were not lost on his fellow-countrymen. These were usually political. Cæsar Boliaco was another ardent spirit, who loved to sing songs of a truly national character. It is he who revived the old legends, and showed how the splendid church of Argès, thrice destroyed by sorcerers, was finally left in peace. A woman was to be immolated that the workmen might be saved from the gallows, and Manoli, the architect, became the executioner. This was the echo in the mountains:—

"Manoli! O master, Manoli!
The wall holds me fast:
My milk whitens the stone!
Art thou drunk or mad?
Adieu, my master, Manoli!"

But Manoli is neither drunk nor mad. He has sworn an oath, and he must not shrink from it, but complete the sacrifice which he has taken in hand; he does complete it, and he dies of love on the tomb of the victim whom he has thus immured, and

"From that day church and convent,
Remaining firm on their foundation,
Throw the passer-by into ecstasies."

Negruçi was one of the most distinguished *littérateurs* of Moldavia. His "Aprod Purice" is

a real *chef d'œuvre.* It is an epic poem on Stephen the Great, and in it we see depicted the lives, the manners, and the costume of the ancient Moldavians. Chroïot, a general of Matthias Corvinus, attacks the country, and all the inhabitants rise up in arms to resist him. Stephen and Chroïot seek each other in the *mêlée* :—

"With his own intrepid arm, Stephen cleaves for himself a road through his enemies, and the earth is red with the blood which is spilled around him; but his horse is struck by a ball, and totters and falls, neighs for the last time, and dies. Stephen has fallen with him. 'Pages,' he cries, 'yield not, but rally about me.' Chroïot, who has seen his mishap, cries on his side, 'Comrades, victory! The enemy has fallen, he is dead; seize him and throw him to the crows, that they too may have their enjoyment when we have satisfied our vengeance.'"

But Aprod Purice, the hero of the poem, dismounts and raises Stephen, and history relates the rest.

A very distinguished writer is Negruçi, the author of a poem called "The Deluge," and of several prose works. Other well-known names are those of Cuciurëno and Donici, two writers of fables, Stammati, Rosetti, and Aristias.

Education is by no means neglected in this country, though there is, as I have said, still much to be done. There are in the towns 246 primary schools: 136 for boys and 110 for girls; and in the country 1,975 primary schools: 1,871 for boys and 84 for girls. The town scholars number 26,160, of whom 18,682 are boys and 7,478 girls; while the country scholars amount to 55,985, comprising 51,727 boys and 4,258 girls. Secondary education is represented by 14 *gymnases*, 7 *lycées*, 8 seminaries, and 5 schools for little girls. These make up altogether 5,393 pupils. For special instruction there are 22 schools, with 171 professors and 1,338 pupils. There are also two universities in Moldo-Wallachia. The University of Bucharest had, in 1873, 46 professors and 416 students; while that of Jassy had 21 professors and 155 pupils. There are three military schools: one for artillery and engineers, with 18 professors and 60 pupils; a special cavalry school, with 8 professors and 116 pupils; and a school for the sons of officers, with 15 professors and 60 pupils.

Bucharest abounds in large and well-managed schools for the youth of all ranks. There are French and German schools for young ladies, where many languages are studied and practised with a

zeal too seldom to be found in this more favoured land. Almost every respectable Roumanian living at Bucharest can make himself understood both in French and German. Amongst the upper orders of society these languages are thoroughly learned, and Italian and English are frequently added to the course. Indeed, nearly every one belonging to the patrician class knows something of our tongue; and there are men who read the *Times* daily, and whose acquaintance with our best authors would put not a few of our fellow-countrymen to shame. Thirty years ago modern Greek was exclusively spoken at Court and in society. Now French has superseded it, and is cultivated by people of education, who speak and write it more correctly than their own Roumanian. But all who have any leisure are great readers, and display much energy in the acquirement of languages.

CHAPTER XII.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

I HAVE already enumerated the various classes and sections of which the Roumanian community is composed, detailing at the same time their habits, position, and mode of life. I now propose in this chapter to describe certain peculiarities which are, to some extent, common to them all, and which distinguish them from other nationalities. England has its Derby Day, Spain its bull fights, Paris its boulevards; let us see what are the special characteristics of the inhabitants of Moldo-Wallachia.

First of all, as I have before said, the Church plays a prominent part in the social economy, although superstition and indifference are in many instances the rule rather than the exception. Fast-days and festivals fill up a great portion of the year, and cannot, therefore, fail to exercise an extraordinary effect on the population generally. Almost every week there is some festival on the cards, the result being revelry and idleness, with a sequel which is decidedly the reverse of profitable.

There are the Saints' days, by which term I mean not only the days devoted to the great saints, as in our own country, but also those kept in honour of certain individuals, of whom we know little or nothing. On these occasions there is any amount of waste of time. Many of the shops are closed early; labour is at a standstill; and the people turn out in holiday costume, thoroughly wound up for enjoyment. It is *de rigueur* to visit on this day all those of your acquaintance who rejoice in the same name as this particular saint. Thus, on St. Demetrius's day, all the Demetrakis have to be interviewed. This is often by no means a light matter, seeing that certain names are exceedingly popular with the natives, and are borne by "troops of friends;" but it must be done, *coûte que coûte.* And then you breathe freely until another Saint's day dawns with the flight of time. The Saint's day is always the signal for a rush to the various promenades, when the weather is fine, the middle and lower classes concluding with an hour or two in the pleasure-gardens, where the *laoutari* are playing themselves black in the face, with the perspiration streaming from every pore. This is grand fun. The Carnival is the fashionable season at Bucharest, and ball after ball is given, duels and quarrels being then of almost

daily occurrence. The weather is still fearfully cold, but every one braves it admirably, and sledges glide along in every direction at top speed, always ending with a run up and down the *Chaussée*. Peculiar to the Carnival are the *bals masqués*, the most correct of which are those which take place at the Theatre. These are very amusing. The Theatre is splendidly got up for the occasion, the boxes being filled with spectators, while in the *parterre* wander the company, the gentlemen in evening dress, the ladies attired in various costumes and in the domino, with which they cannot dispense. There is, of course, much flirtation, not unmingled with intrigue, and supper is always to be had afterwards at the hotel opposite. Sometimes the men dress up as women, which proceeding occasionally leads to confusion. One night two raw youths fresh from England found themselves at a *bal masqué*. They knew nobody, and I was much surprised to perceive them, after the lapse of a few minutes, marching about each with a lady on his arm. Half an hour after, on approaching the *buffet*, I noticed the pair seated on a sofa with their *belles*, whom they were regaling with ices and *bonbons* in the most sumptuous manner. Fancying that I detected something strange in the voice of one of the ladies, I walked up and soon was

in conversation with the party. The laugh of the fair one confirmed my suspicions, and a glance at her hand, which was as large as my own, made everything clear. Bending over the blushing damsel, I whispered a few words into her ear, and the raw lads rapidly became jealous. I had recognised a couple of Wallachians with whom I was slightly acquainted, and who were making merry at their expense. A few minutes after, the victims were wandering about alone and disconsolate, *minus* a napoleon or two consumed in refreshments. This is just the sort of thing which the light-hearted Roumanians would enjoy, fun of every kind and practical joking being entirely in their line. The Carnival over, Lent begins, and then there are no more balls or parties until Easter. Lent is a regular starvation time, and there is a general feeling of relief when it is over, as it accords but ill with the gay character of the natives. Holy week, in particular, is an event of much tribulation. Night after night the churches are thronged with the company of the faithful, who, I must admit, are at this period very assiduous in their devotions. Of course the place reeks with garlic, and almost every one is as pale as a ghost, for a six weeks' fast has begun to tell its tale; but this only heightens the effect. It is on Good Friday

evening that the scene is most impressive. The churches are then simply crowded with men and women bearing lighted tapers, the wax from which rapidly damages the coats and dresses of the surrounding folk. The churchyards, too, are well filled, as there is by no means room for all inside. The outsiders usually squat on the different seats, or stand about in groups, smoking the famous cigarette. After an interval a bell begins to toll, and then energy succeeds to apathy in the churchyards. Cigarettes are flung away, tapers are illuminated, and every one is on his feet. Soon from the church issues an enormous cross, which is followed by the priests and the people in one long line. The outsiders join in and form the tail, and thus, in slow procession, chanting a mournful dirge, the multitude move thrice round the sacred edifice. This done, the cross is borne back to the church, and all is over. As soon as Easter Day has struck, there is high mass at the Cathedral, which is usually attended by the Prince and the prominent members of his Court. The practice has been adhered to from time immemorial, and Prince Charles, although a rigid Papist, still keeps it up. Easter Day is made to last over the following Monday and Tuesday, during which period nothing is bought or sold. It is always an

occasion of great festivity, and its observance is by no means in accordance with the laws of strict hygiene. The promenade is now doubly enjoyed, as the spring has begun, and there is a general display of lighter attire. And the Moldo-Wallachians thoroughly understand how to make the most of a holiday. They, at any rate, do not take their pleasure sadly. There is generally an afternoon performance at the Theatre on Easter Day, and a grand dance in the evening. The first of May, as in Vienna and elsewhere, is respected as it should be. Rising at four o'clock in the morning, the inhabitants of Bucharest repair to the Cismegiu, where they take their first cup of coffee, and drink in the bracing air. Bands play, the peasants dance, and all is jollity. By eight every one has disappeared, for the sun begins to grow hot, and it is time to be indoors.

I should be guilty of an unpardonable offence were I to omit all mention of the grand fair of the *Mosii*, or ancestors, which is held in early summer every year. This is decidedly the people's Carnival. The site of the *Mosii* is the ground lying just outside the south-east corner of Bucharest. A week before it takes place, preparations are already on foot. Booths and tents are pitched in rich pro-

fusion. Waggons laden with wares of every description arrive from all parts of the country, from South Russia, from Transylvania, and even remoter regions. There are Turks and Swiss and Gipsies in plenty, and everything one wants to buy. Sometimes the Prince and Princess, accompanied by the members of the Court, open the *Mosii* with due pomp and ceremony. No one, from the highest to the lowest, is absent from this national demonstration, for such it may fairly be called. In every other booth the irrepressible *laoutari* are to be seen, playing, as if their lives depended on their speed, some festal jig, in which the bystanders join in turn, to the evident delight of the little coterie. Here, too, is danced the *hora*, the Roumanian dance *par excellence*. A number of persons join hands and form a ring, sometimes going round, sometimes advancing and receding, but all keeping wonderful time, a truly pleasing sight. Indispensable adjuncts of the *Mosii* are a species of ginger-bread and a small coloured balloon similar to those given away at the Louvre shops. Each carriage and cab, as it returns to the town, is resplendent with a multitude of these balloons. Thousands of people encamp for a good fortnight on the ground, yet there are but few rows, and order and tranquillity reign

supreme, although perfect sobriety is not always to be expected. Christmas is always observed with becoming festivity, and for another three days the time is spent in eating and drinking. Mummers dress up on these occasions and go from house to house, collecting contributions. The Deity, Christ, the Magi, and other persons mentioned in Holy Writ, are represented in the most peculiar manner.

In the month of January every year the river Dambovitza is blessed by the priests. The Prince assists at the ceremony, accompanied by his ministers, the principal functionaries of the municipal board, and many of the officers of the garrison. The ice is broken, and sundry fanatics precipitate themselves into the water; any Jew who may be lingering in the neighbourhood being seized, and, *nolens volens*, forced to follow their pious example. Much waste of gunpowder crowns the whole, and the river is left to its fate, and to its grateful duty of poisoning the city until the return of its annual festival. One day in the year a troop of gipsies enter your court, bearing branches of trees. They advance to the door, and your men, already provided, dash buckets of water all over them. They shriek and shiver, but a handful of coppers soon

sets everything to rights, and they proceed on their damp errand.

In fine weather, Prince Charles often has a parade of the officers in garrison on a Sunday morning at the Cismegiu. At about eleven o'clock, the officers muster in the park, and are drawn up according to their regiments, there being always two lines. The Prince walks through the lines, and talks to one and the other. This is a very interesting sight, and there are of course a number of lovely spectators to enhance the enjoyment. Prince Charles evidently desires to be popular with the Army, which deposed his predecessor, Couza. Prince Couza was, by the way, a colonel in the Moldavian service before he ascended the throne. When his election took place, there was to have been a separate Hospodar for each principality, but the Wallachians and Moldavians tricked Europe by choosing the same man. Couza was much surprised at his elevation, of which he was first apprised while playing at billiards, in his shirt-sleeves, at a Jassy café. He was always a man of unaffected manners, and everyone who was at all *comme il faut* had an *entrée* at the Palace. Prince Couza was deposed as suddenly as he was raised. One morning, to the astonishment of everyone not connected

with the plot, it was learned that he was already in Transylvania, beyond the Wallachian frontier. During the night the streets had been lined with troops, and a body of officers of high rank, bearing a deed of abdication, had burst into the Palace, and making their way to Couza's room, had obliged him to sign it and disappear without delay. Couza, I regret to say, was not alone when he was found; and a lady, very lightly clad, was compelled to make the best of her way, through long corridors lined with grinning soldiery, to the carriage which was awaiting her. Couza died abroad while I was at Bucharest. I was therefore much amused the other day on reading an announcement in an English journal, to the effect that the Roumanians were actually contemplating the abdication of Prince Charles and the restoration of their old favourite! They have, I may add, since bitterly regretted the step which was then taken. Often have they sighed for Couza. But he is dead; and the busy world knows him no more.

The marriage ceremony, to which I have already had occasion to refer more than once, comes off, in the case of the higher classes, late in the evening, but in that of the lower, earlier in the day. The rich people are sometimes married at church, some-

times at home. I cannot do better than give an account of the ceremony as it should be performed. The bride and bridegroom, surrounded by their friends, take their stand on a carpet on which several coins are strewn, the moral being that they prefer domestic happiness to any quantity of wealth. The *pope* puts a crown on their heads, to signify that they will have authority over their posterity. Tapers are handed round, and then there are showers of *bonbons*. In the mountains nuts are thrown instead. A French writer asks if these are relics of the custom alluded to by Virgil in the words, "*Nuces sparge, marite.*" This is very probable. There is a grand spread afterwards, which is followed by a dance, and all is gaiety and animation. The funeral, on the other hand, is also striking in its way. One can scarcely move out of doors of an afternoon without meeting several processions escorting the dead to their long homes. I shall describe the funeral of a girl who died two days ago in all the bloom of youth and beauty. Two *gendarmes*, in full uniform and well mounted, clear a path for the long line. Ten of the girl's companions, attired in white muslin and wearing white wreaths, plod wearily along through mud and through mire. Cold they are, and splashed from

head to foot, yet they push bravely on. They are followed by a company of priests—the elder men in cabs, the younger on foot and humming a low chant. They are all attired in gorgeous robes, and every church they pass sends forth a sad mourning toll from its glittering belfry. The hearse comes next, adorned with gilded figures of angels, and drawn by four or six sable steeds. Men bearing torches walk on either side of it. The corpse reclines on a bier, exposed to the public gaze. It is habited in white, and no pains have been spared to render its appearance as striking as possible. The hair is carefully braided, the pallid cheeks and lips are rouged, a rosebud being perhaps laid on the latter. The sight is ghastly and painful in the extreme. What a contrast between all this show and circumstance and the passive shrunken body in whose honour it is done, and which rolls from side to side with every motion of the hearse, jolting now over jagged stones, and anon tottering into some foul gutter! A full regimental band tramps behind, toiling painfully through some excruciating funeral march, and raising notes truly heartrending in their dreary melancholy. Their music may be heard far away, for their trumpets blare as though they would wake the dead. Sometimes the military

band is replaced by a Gipsy *troupe*, with their softer fiddles and pipes. The effect is then less distressing, for there is something solemn and soothing in the sweet refined tones of the poor Tzigan. The carriages of the relatives and friends of the deceased close the procession. The mourners, the women particularly, usually make great demonstrations of grief, wailing, weeping, and shrieking, and occasionally striving to precipitate themselves from the vehicle. Amongst the women belonging to the poorer classes the scene is usually a little ludicrous, as they seem to consider it their bounden duty to raise an extra lugubrious howl the moment that any well-dressed person strikes upon their view. I recollect an old woman of the middle class, who often regretted that her son-in-law, a confirmed invalid, was so tenacious of life. "Doctor," she used to say to her medical man, "it is all very well, but he costs us a great deal of money. Do you think he will last much longer? His has been such an expensive illness." Finally the man went the way of all flesh. Happening to come, in his brougham, upon the funeral procession as it rounded a corner, our doctor was amused to see the old female, propped by a pair of supporters, tearing her front off, digging her nails into her cheeks, lurch-

ing in every direction, and screeching with the utmost violence. In her heart of hearts she was pleased at her loss, but she thought this the correct thing, so she did it. Passing through the churchyards at night, one often perceives lamps burning over the graves, and cakes and other articles of food strewn thereon. The lamps are placed to frighten away the evil spirits, and the food is brought to feed the hungry soul of the departed one. The Wallachians are staunch believers in ghosts, as I have already shown. Their superstitions are innumerable, but often poetical, as is testified by their belief that on a fine Easter morning a lamb may be seen dancing in the sun.

Curious legends are connected with many a place, some handed down in tradition from father to son through countless generations. One which attaches to the Shepherd's Cross, on the Buceci, is well worth recording. A young shepherd of Ardialia learned to love his master's daughter. One day he dared to confess his love, and to ask the girl in marriage. Brave and honest, and endowed with many graces both of mind and body, he was not an undesirable son-in-law; but he was miserably poor, so his master determined to ascertain whether he really loved the maid, or whether ambition was the

sole motive which prompted the request. Therefore the master spoke out simply and to the point: "My daughter you shall have, but on one condition, namely, that you pass the winter on the mountain-top." This was a fearful ordeal, and one which might well appal the stoutest heart; but the shepherd loved, and he asked no more. At the close of the autumn he entrusted his flock to his brethren of Sinaïa, and went to the convent, where he burnt a taper in honour of the Holy Virgin and another in honour of St. Dimitry, and kissed the sacred *icons*. Then, taking with him a supply of maize flour, three cheeses, and his *ploskà* of *raku*, he climbed the Buceci with his dog, the faithful companion of his solitary hours. It was the 28th of October, and the snow had already begun to whiten the tops of the mountains, and was falling that day in immense flakes, warning the poor shepherd of his fate, had he but listened to the soft voice. But, like Excelsior, he pressed ever onward, and took his post on the summit of a lofty crag. Here he lived five awful months. How he lived no one can tell. From vultures and bears and other beasts of prey he had nothing to dread. The cold was too intense for them to dwell here. They sought a milder clime, and made their abode in the lower regions.

But there was a worse enemy still for him; the deadly, pitiless frost. Against this he could offer but a poor resistance. A fire was not easy to kindle, and even when kindled it could not always last. There was absolutely no shelter. There for five livelong months lived that dauntless heart, chilled by everything, and only kept alive by the fire of love, which proved the lord of all. In his dog, however, which happily survived, he had a true comrade, whose society must have cheered and consoled him through the silent watches of the day and night. Did he keep any account of time? No one can tell. It was on the day succeeding the Festival of the Annunciation that his fellow shepherds climbed the mountain in their search for him or his remains. It was a bright and auspicious hour, and every rock rung with the sound of the pipe, played in joyous lightness by many a cheerful mouth. The lambs too skipped from crag to crag in their delight at finding themselves free to roam in the blithesome atmosphere and 'mid the bubbling rills. Soon a cry of triumph resounded from every one. The shepherd was still there; his dog had run to meet them. Would he not come too? Perhaps he was even now following his faithful companion, anxious to anticipate his steps. But he came not, and it was only when

they had ascended and had gained the plateau at the top that they beheld their long lost friend. He was alive; he breathed; would he not advance, or at least stretch out an arm towards them? Alas! he could not move. He stood alone, as if in a trance, on the ledge of rock. "Mark," they shouted, "thou hast conquered; thou wilt live!" Mark saw them; he heard their voices, but could make no sign; he remained in a state of petrifaction. Rigid he stood as a pillar, conscious, but still paralysed. On a sudden he essayed to leave his pedestal; his knees failed him, and he fell—fell in the moment of liberty, in the very pride of his glorious achievement. And as he fell he rolled to the base of the crag. His brethren gathered round him, weeping bitter tears of anguish; he knew them, clasped their hands, tried in vain to utter a word, and then his spirit fled. They made him a grave where he lay, and in the brilliant sunshine of Eastertide they erected the cross in his memory which remains to this day. Thus is it that even now the top of the Buceci is called *Doru*, or Mount of Mourning and Woe.

Another legend is also well worth recording. It is that of Seraphine. Many years ago, when troubles were spread like a pall over the land, a young and

beautiful woman, habited in black, made her abode in the lonely and desolate country at the confluence of the Martin and the Seraphine. During the summer she lived in the hollow trees; in winter in the caves of the mountain. Herbs and vegetables were her only food, and she never spoke to shepherd or hermit. One day she fell ill, and the holy men of the desert, missing her welcome figure, sought her out with diligence, and found her lying on a rude couch made of dried leaves. They addressed her, and her replies showed that she was a stranger. But they were kind to her nevertheless, and tended her carefully until she was restored to health. Then they left her to follow her own devices, and for five long years she continued her wandering mode of existence. One day, however, cries and groans caused every corner of the mountain to ring again. It was the fair unknown. There she lay, her face prone on the earth, bathed in her own blood. The shepherd who came upon her learned, to his utter misery, that the lovely stranger had caught her right foot in a trap, which he had set for the savage bear. Alas! he was guilty of her death. Losing not a moment in freeing the girl from the trap, he tore his garments into rags, vainly endeavouring to stanch the wound

which the recluse had received in the forehead when she fell to the ground. He was too late. Seraphine was dying fast. In her agony she suffered from a devouring thirst, and besought the shepherd to take her to the brink of the stream. Leaning over the placid wave, she touched it with her lips, and then fell asleep, never to waken more. The shepherd hollowed out a grave where she died; but he pined and grew thinner and paler with every sun that set. A few months passed away, and then the hermits beheld him stretched without life on the very spot where the poor girl had breathed her last in his arms. Two rings and two kerchiefs are the sole relics of this sad tale. The same turf covers them both.

Near Rômnic is a convent called *Intr'un lemnu*, or "In a piece of wood," to which a curious story attaches. One account says that on the very spot where the present cloister is situated, an *icon* of the Holy Virgin had been discovered on a tree. The inhabitants of the district adored this *icon*, and bore it with much pomp and ceremony to a neighbouring church, where they left it in peace for the night. But when the morning dawned, the *icon* had disappeared, and had returned to its favourite tree. Therefore it was decided to build a church at the

place, and from that time the *icon* was guilty of no more vagaries.

The other story relates that once upon a time a holy man dwelt in the forest which crowns the hill at the foot of which the convent now lies. The *icon* of the Holy Virgin was placed by him in the trunk of an oak, which was his *prie-Dieu* and his altar, whence he addressed to Heaven his fervent prayers and glowing vows. One day, whilst he was engaged in his frequent devotions, a terrible thunderstorm came on. The thunder rolled over his head, the lightning flashed around, the earth shook under his feet. But, though half blind with the lightning and deafened by the thunder, the pious one, undaunted, still knelt, and sent his orisons with redoubled sanctity to the throne of the Most High. Suddenly a bolt fell, cleaving the oak, which was shrivelled up, like a scroll, in the flames. But *icon* and saint survived unhurt, and the holy man, in his thankfulness to Providence for his miraculous escape, vowed that he would build in an oak a chapel in honour of the Virgin. Choosing for the purpose the tallest and strongest of the kings of the forest, he cut and sawed until the planks were ready for the chapel, the planks of a single tree. Long did the chapel exist to tell the

tale; but the company of the faithful, perceiving that it was falling into ruins, raised around it a pile of masonry, which girt it in on every side. Such is the origin of the convent.

The Moldo-Wallachians claim the French poet Ronsard as a compatriot. It is said that the glory of the house of Valois excited the admiration and curiosity of a number of the boyards; and that, desiring to see and to serve the illustrious King of France, the son of the Ban of Maracini formed a small band composed of his best soldiers, and travelling through Hungary and Germany, presented himself at the court of Philip. Receiving a welcome reception, as was his just due, he settled for ever in France, espoused a daughter of the house of La Trémouille, and, translating his own name into Ronsard, became completely gallicised. He was the ancestor of the poet.

The Roumanians, by the way, who have always cherished a warm affection for France, regarding it as the representative of the Latin race, once appealed for assistance to the Great Napoleon, having been sorely oppressed by the Russians. But Bonaparte, who perhaps had scarcely heard of them, had other work to do. Still, however, his name is remembered in Transylvania, and the peasantry still

repeat the touching couplet which they composed when he was conveyed to St. Helena :—

" Nu duceti asà departe
Pe-imperatu Bonaparte ! "

" Do not take so far
The Emperor Bonaparte ! "

As for the Roumanians generally, they are essentially Bonapartists, for the third Napoleon was the best friend they ever had. Of course, there are Republicans and Radicals among them; but the Bonapartists form the majority.

On the bank of the river Albo is an enormous block of granite, which is currently supposed to have once been the statue of Docia, the daughter of Decebalus, broken in 1704 by an avalanche. This is the *Genius Daciarum*, mentioned in the following inscription, which was found at Carlsburg (Alba Carolina) in Ardialia :—

" Cœlesti Augustæ
Et Æsculapio Augusto
Et genio
Carthaginis et
Genio Daciarum
Volus. Terentius
Prudens Uttedanius
Leg. aug. 6
Leg. XIII. Gem. leg.
Aug. pro præt.
Provinciæ Rhetiæ."

CHAPTER XIII.

A "RAID" INTO TRANSYLVANIA.

I HAVE already alluded, in one or two places, to the connection which is constantly kept up between the Roumanians of Moldo-Wallachia and those of Transylvania. Ardialia, as it is also called, long proved a veritable refuge to the Daco-Romans, when the Goths and Huns and other wild races rode roughshod over their plains. Four-fifths of the inhabitants of Transylvania are of Roumanian extraction; and many of these, with a number of the Szeklers, cross the frontier every year to find work for themselves and pasturage for their flocks and herds. The remaining population of Transylvania is composed of the Magyar landlords and the Saxon colonists, who were invited, in the twelfth century, by King Geyza II., to settle in the country, and have remained there ever since. The Roumanians of Ardialia have always been an oppressed class, for a long time acting as serfs to the Magyar noble. Indeed many of the Moldo-Wallachians hate the Hungarian more than they do any one else, and

their conduct during the last rebellion, combined with the attitude of Russia, helped materially to curb the power of the aristocracy. A young Roumanian told me one day that his father, when on his death-bed, had caused himself and his brothers to swear eternal enmity to the Magyar. At this price alone could he die content. And he added that this was often the case. There is no love lost between Moldavian and Russian, but the Hungarian is the most detested. As for the Turks, they were considered rather a joke than otherwise. No one seemed to trouble himself much about them a few years ago.

The grand ambition of the Roumanian officers a short time since, before Russia put other plans into their heads, was the revival of the ancient province of Dacia through the conquest and incorporation of Transylvania. Could they only obtain Ardialia, the Bukovine, and the remainder of Bessarabia, they would, they said, be happy ever after. Of course all this was very amusing, for they might then as well have tried to climb up to the moon. Now, however, who knows what surprises time may not have in store for some of us? Up to the year 1873, in the summer of which I left the country for good and all, I had never heard of the languishing

Bulgarians. A journey through Bulgaria had filled me with astonishment at the superiority of that province over the neighbouring Wallachia. Thus is it possible to live for months near the crater of a volcano without even suspecting its existence! There seemed to me to be as much difference between the Servians and the Wallachians as between the Bulgarians and the Turks. Now, however, theory has come to the rescue, and all is made plain. We hear things in England of which we never dreamt while we lived on the spot itself. How grateful ought we not to be to Mr. Gladstone and the *Daily News* for all their politeness! Mr. Gladstone, *par parenthèse*, although not a Bulgarian swineherd, is a Wallachian citizen.

But to return to my subject. It was in the summer of 1872 that, worn out with fever, I was advised to try a few weeks in Transylvania for the sake of change of air. My preparations were speedily made, and I soon found myself in the train *en route* for Ploesti. The country between Bucharest and Ploesti is somewhat barren and bare, so that I was not sorry, after a run of three hours, to find myself at the latter town. I immediately drove to the best hotel the place afforded, and, after dinner, sallied forth to make observations. I had

heard grand stories of the attractions which Ploesti presented; but could not find a single one. The town was a collection of hovels, diversified only here and there by a respectable house. The population seemed to consist exclusively of pigs, which strutted gracefully about the streets, monarchs of all they surveyed. And there was not a thing to be done. There were, of course, a few *troupes* of *laoutari* scraping away, to the delight of some half-dozens of perky *employés*. But this kind of thing was scarcely to my taste, and I returned to the hotel. The rooms were horribly dirty, and the sheet tacked on to the counterpane of my bed had evidently done duty for months. But, as was my wont, I spread my rug over all, and thus enjoyed a fair amount of repose, only broken in the middle of the night by an officious servant, who, after the custom of the country, seemed inclined to take pity on my solitude. Ploesti was like an oven, and quite as warm as Bucharest, so I was not sorry when the following evening saw me safely ensconced in the *diligence*, *en route* for Brasiov or Cronstadt. It was a lovely night, and as we rattled along the good broad road, lined on either side with crops of wheat and maize, we began to breathe freely again. The tedium of the journey was beguiled by the

attention of companies of gipsy children, which, quite naked, ran for miles after the vehicle, eager to get a few *bani* as the reward of their perseverance. Ten o'clock brought us to Campina, a village at the foot of the hills. Here we supped tolerably well, and then on board again for a cruise through the Carpathian range. It soon grew terribly cold, and sleep was out of the question, what with the jolting and the noise. However, our condition had begun to improve, when we were summoned from the interior of the coach by the conductor, who ordered us to descend, as we were about to cross a dangerous bridge. There was no help for it, and we had to make the best of our way across a species of beach, covered with huge rocks and running streams. All this was in pitchy darkness, and I soon came to the conclusion that the remedy might be worse than the disease. I was confirmed in this opinion by the state of my companions on our return to the *diligence*. One had severely bruised his leg; another was wet through as high as his knees; another had fallen and cut his hands. After this nothing would induce me to abandon the ark of safety, for such I determined it to be. I stuck to the *diligence*, in spite of warnings and prayers, all through that night, and left the

rest to trudge alone, when called upon to do so. Nor had I any reason to repent my choice. We left two wounded at the hotel at Sinaïa, which we reached at five in the morning. Besides this hotel there is a monastery of some renown; and it is to Sinaïa that the Prince and Princess retire during the intolerably warm weather. The scenery here is superb. Lofty mountains, covered with trees, rise on all sides around you, and the atmosphere is splendid. By seven o'clock we were at Prédial, the frontier station, and, after showing passports and going through various ceremonies, we were allowed to pass on, arriving at Brasiov at noon.

I found Transylvania a very pleasant region after the heat of Wallachia. It was so fresh, so pure, with its undulating hills, smiling fields, and purling rills, that it filled me with delight. The fever vanished, as if by magic, and I saw no more of it for a very long time. Cronstadt is a fine old town. The ancient portion of the city is surrounded by ruined fortifications and a moat, all overgrown with ivy, but very picturesque. Near it rises the Capellanberg, a beautifully wooded mountain. There is a fine old Lutheran cathedral, with a wonderful organ; a spacious market-place, quite open; and the

barracks give accommodation to a very fair garrison. The streets are well paved, and the *Allée*, or promenade, which divides the new town from the old, is exceedingly pleasant. Here I had an opportunity of studying the types of the various populations which inhabit Transylvania, for it was thronged every other evening, when the band played. There was the dashing Hungarian officer, in handsome uniform, with jingling spurs and clanking sabre, the *beau idéal* of a cavalier. There the bright blue-eyed Saxon maid, with the blond tresses, shrinking modestly from the public gaze. There the Roumanian *belle*, as coquettish as her sisters on the other side of the Carpathians, casting languishing glances, and softly prattling in her *limba romanesca*. It was indeed a fascinating sight. Here and there I noticed a Wallachian officer, in his war paint, who had perhaps come for a day or two from the frontier station. Cronstadt was, in the year 1849, the scene of a furious fight between the Hungarians and the Russians; a fight which some of the townspeople remember with bitter resentment. Not far from Cronstadt are the famous baths of Elipatak and Sizon, which are frequented by the Magyar nobility and by many of the Roumanian boyards during the autumn season. The other towns of

Transylvania, or Siebenbürgen, as the Germans call it, are cosy and comfortable, Hermanstadt being about the best.

The Szeklers, the prototypes of the famous hussar, are the cream of the Transylvanian populations. They are splendid men, and speak the purest Hungarian. They are Magyars of the Magyars, and have formed the very bone and sinew of the Austrian cavalry from time immemorial: their horses, uniforms, and equipments being first class. Formerly the high reputation of the Szekler hussars, and their romantic mode of life, brought to them a multitude of British officers. But times are changed, and we have changed with them.

Besides the promenade, there are various amusements at Cronstadt, subscription balls being among the number. There was a heartiness about the enjoyment of these people which really did one good. The *laoutari* were again conspicuous at these entertainments, and I thought their music even superior to that of their brethren in Moldo-Wallachia. The best of these bands, by the way, was one which I heard at Vienna during the Exhibition of 1873. I wonder when such a *troupe* will be introduced to the notice of

the London world. It would create quite a sensation.

Agriculture is, as far as I could gather, practised with fair returns in primitive Transylvania, which affords a good hunting-field for the hardy sportsman. Horses are also bred here with great success, and large studs are kept for the supply of the Austrian cavalry. The mountains, too, afford a rich fund of mineral wealth, and the baths and springs in which Siebenbürgen abounds have acquired a just reputation.

After a stay of several weeks in the country, leading a peaceful, quiet life, I returned to Bucharest by the way I had come, much refreshed and invigorated. I have always preserved a pleasant *souvenir* of this charming land, which is by no means as much known and understood as it ought to be. On one point, however, I can speak with decision. The amalgamation of Transylvania with Roumania, even were it eventually sanctioned by Austro-Hungary in exchange for some other province, would be simply impossible. The whole style of the people, though the majority are of Roumanian origin, renders such an union simply out of the question. The Moldo-Wallachians may rave about ancient Dacia, but since the earlier ages the pro-

vince has been divided, and it is impossible to contend with the work of time. Transylvania is, as it should be, joined to Hungary proper, and it would be an irreparable mistake to attempt any change.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE EARLY HEROES.

THE principality of Wallachia is said to have been founded in 1241 by Radu Negru, Rudolph the Black. That of Moldavia was founded by Bogdan I. in 1290. Rudolph the Black was a prince whose memory is still cherished with pride and veneration by the Roumanians of all classes. Under his fostering care Bucharest, Pitesci, and Tirgovisti became flourishing towns; and it was to him that Argès owed its origin. Rudolph gave to his subjects laws and a constitution which assured them increased prosperity. The sovereignty was rendered elective, and a personal nobility created. Thus a wide field was opened to all who sought fame and honour as a reward of noble deeds, and a proper stimulus was afforded to all alike. Rudolph died in 1265.

Mârcea I., Prince of Wallachia, ascended the throne in 1382, and almost immediately on his accession declared war against Sisman, king of the Wallacho-Bulgarians. In 1387 he possessed himself of Sistova, the Dobrudja, Silistria, and Widdin,

and styled himself: "Kral of Bosnia and of the two Wallachias, Duke of Vàcàras' and Omlas', master of the banate of Severin, despot of the Dobrudja, lord of Silistria and of all the regions extending to the mountains of Adrianople." The victories of Mârcea completed the destruction of the Bulgarian Empire. Attacked on one side by the Wallachians, and on the other by the Turks, Sisman found himself compelled to go to the camp of Ali Pasha, and surrender his country in exchange for his life. About this time Peter I., Prince of Moldavia, became the vassal of Poland. In 1393, Mârcea, sorely pressed by the Hungarians and the Poles, concluded with the Sultan Bayazid the Treaty of Nicopolis, which ran as follows: "By this act of his clemency, Bayazid consents that the principality submitted to his invincible force shall continue to govern itself according to its own laws, leaves to the duke of the country the right of peace and war, exempts the Wallachians from all capitation to his profit, respects the elective principle, and only demands of the sovereign a tribute of 3000 *piastres* of the country, or 500 Turkish *piastres*, equivalent to 417 Venetian ducats." Thus Wallachia, which for 150 years had incessantly fought against Hungarian aggression, voluntarily placed

itself under the suzerainty of the Sultan. In 1396, Mârcea concluded a treaty with Sigismund, king of Hungary, by which he promised to assist him in his attack upon the Turks, the result of which was the battle of Nicopolis, in which the Christians were defeated, chiefly owing to the defection of the Wallachian prince, who passed over to the enemy. Stephen of Moldavia, on the other hand, fought well and bravely for Sigismund, and might still have turned the tide, had not the Despot of Servia come up with reinforcements for Bayazid. Mârcea's treason, however, though it saved his life, cost his people much. The tribute was raised to 10,000 ducats, and 500 children were annually handed over to the Turks. In 1398, Mârcea recrossed the Danube, utterly routed the Sultan, and obliged Bayazid to retire to Adrianople, thus freeing himself once more from his allegiance.

In 1401, Alexander I., called the Good, Prince of Moldavia, voluntarily replaced that province under the suzerainty of Poland. One of the clauses of the Act stipulated that, although Alexander bound himself to assist his sovereign whenever he made war, he would never act against the Podolians, who were too near him, or the Prussians who were too remote. In 1415, Wallachia

was invaded by Mahomet, who obliged Mârcea once more to submit, raised the tribute, and imposed other concessions. Mârcea died in 1418. There was civil war between Wallachia and Moldavia in 1432, a fact which distinctly proves that there was no vitalbond of union between them.

The Battle of Cossova, fought on the 17th of October, 1448, between John Corvinus, with an army of Hungarians, Szeklers, Wallachians, Germans, and Bohemians, and the Sultan Amurath, proved once more a source of affliction to the Wallachians. The allies were defeated, and the tribute was again raised. In 1450, Casimir of Poland proposed in a meeting of the Diet that Moldavia should be definitely incorporated. This proposition would have been joyfully accepted, had they not feared the untractable temper of the Moldavians, and the vicinity of the Turks in Bulgaria, which led to the decision that Moldavia should still be treated as a vassal, and that it should continue to serve as a rampart against the attacks of the Sultans. A Polish army accordingly invaded Moldavia, and Bogdan IV. promised to pay an annual tribute of 7000 pieces of gold, 200 horses, 200 oxen, and 300 cartloads of sturgeon. But on the 6th of September Bogdan had his revenge. He cut the Polish

army to pieces, having attacked it unawares, and severely punished his enemies. In 1456 died John Corvinus, a native of the banate of Craïova, in Wallachia; of whom the Sultan Mahomet said, on learning this intelligence: "Yes, he was my enemy, but I regret him; for there never was so great a man."

Vlad V., of Wallachia, surnamed "The Impaler," was a hero, but a cruel tyrant. He impaled 500 *Scindromes*, who had returned with money from Bohemia, in order that he might seize their wealth. He threw into the fire 400 young Transylvanians, who had crossed over into Wallachia to preach a crusade. And he massacred 500 boyards, who had dared to remonstrate with him. It was he who concluded the second Treaty with the Turks, signed in 1460, by which the Treaty of Nicopolis, concluded in 1393, was confirmed, and the suzerainty of the Sultans established on a firm basis. According to this agreement, the duke was to be elected by the metropolitan, the bishops, and the boyards, and was to retain the right of peace and war, a right, by the way, which the Moldavians had surrendered to the Polish sovereigns. There was to be complete autonomy, the only concession of any practical importance being the payment of a yearly tribute of 10,000 ducats. The Wallachians were

declared exempt from the *haratch*, or capitation tax. To show his zeal, Vlad invaded and ravaged Transylvania at the head of an army composed of Turks and Wallachians. The inhabitants of Tirgovisti having conspired against him in 1462, Vlad returned to that town on Easter-day, and committed the most frightful excesses. He impaled 300 of the principal conspirators round the walls, and condemned their wives and children to perpetual labour. In the same year Vlad seized the Governor of Widdin and his secretary, to whom he had given an audience, cut off their arms and their legs, and cruelly impaled them. Shortly afterwards he crossed the Danube, devastated Bulgaria, and impaled 25,000 Turco-Bulgarian prisoners in the vast plain of Prælatu. The Sultan, Mahomet II., could not put up with these insults, but set out in pursuit of Vlad. This prince, however, with consummate skill, utterly routed the Turkish army, which numbered 250,000 men, forcing it to retire in disorder towards the Danube. Mahomet at last proved too strong for the Wallachians, and made his way to Bucharest, which he found completely deserted. Vlad was obliged to flee into Transylvania, and the Turks ravaged the country. Radu III. was nominated prince by the Sultan; the tribute was once

more raised, and the Dukes of Wallachia were reduced to the rank of pashas with two tails. About this time the Turks gained possession of Bosnia and Sclavonia. In 1466, Stephen of Moldavia renewed his treaties with Poland. This prince conquered Rudolph III. of Wallachia in 1473, but was unable to unite the two principalities. Stephen also routed the Ottoman army, in a somewhat curious fashion, in the same year. Moldavia having been invaded by the Turks, he awaited their approach on the river Bûrlatu, with an army of 40,000 Moldavians, 2000 Poles, and 5000 Szeklers. As his force was inferior to that of the Turks and Wallachians, he had recourse to a *ruse*. Placing 5000 men in a neighbouring forest, he ordered them to make a great noise with various instruments as soon as the engagement took a serious turn. This they did, and the Mahomedans, seized with panic, took to flight, and many of them were massacred. Stephen subsequently defeated Rudolph at Slam-Rômnic, winning the district of Putna as the reward of his victory. Stephen captured 5000 Turkish prisoners, including four pashas, four standards, and all the baggage. Vlad V. was restored to the throne of Wallachia in 1476. He soon recommenced his atrocities. In order to rid himself of the *Scin-*

dromes, he invited them to a festival, made them all drunk, and threw them into the fire. Another amusement of his was the construction of an enormous caldron, into which he thrust his victims. Then, filling it with water, he made it boil, and took pleasure in the anguish of the sufferers. When the people whom he impaled writhed in agony, he had their hands and feet nailed to the posts. Some Tartars who had gone to ask him to spare one of their party, who had been condemned to be hanged for theft, were compelled to eat the man roasted. The skin was removed from the feet of his Turkish prisoners, which were then rubbed with salt and licked by goats. One day Vlad invited to his table a priest who had preached against stealing. He put a piece of bread near the priest, which belonged to himself, and then had him impaled for eating it by mistake. Another day, seeing a man going about in a short shirt, he asked him if he had not a wife, and, on his replying in the affirmative, had her impaled, and then gave him another, with the hint that she must make her husband longer shirts. As he was one day walking with one of his oldest boyards in the midst of a number of stakes upon which a detachment of victims was impaled, he asked him if he did not

like the smell of the corpses. The unfortunate boyard, who was being suffocated, replied in the negative, and shortly afterwards was himself impaled, but higher up than the others, in order that he might not be incommoded by the abominable odour. On the other hand, the country was kept by this *régime* in the most tranquil condition. It was thought in those days a good work to exterminate Tartars, Jews and Turks, gipsies, infidels and heretics. As for the Mahomedans, the Christians were quite their equals in cruelty and barbarity. In 1484, Stephen of Moldavia, with much pomp and ceremony, renewed the vows of allegiance to Poland at Colomnia, and repaired to the Danube to resist the invasion of Bayazid II. He had only a small army, and the sight of the immense hosts of the Sultan caused him to retreat in good order to Niamtz. His mother, however, refused to admit him into the citadel, and her words so animated him and his troops, that they all resolved to die rather than yield. Filled with this determination, they marched against the Turks, whom they routed with great slaughter at Resboïana, and compelled to recross the Danube. Stephen soon afterwards defeated the Hungarian general Kraïot, and the glory of Moldavia was at its height.

Rudolph IV. of Wallachia, to whose laws I have already referred in a previous chapter, created a numerous nobility in that principality, and it is believed that the hereditary nobility of Moldavia dates from this period or thereabout. In 1494, John Albert, King of Poland, attempted the conquest of Moldavia, but Stephen cut his army in pieces on its retreat from Suciava, in the mountains of the Bukovine. In the following year, Stephen, at the head of a large army of Moldavians, Tartars, and Turks, ravaged Poland, carrying away 110,000 prisoners, who were settled in Bulgaria, Macedonia, and the Crimea. Of the Duke of Moscow, who was then becoming powerful, Stephen said, "He increases his possessions by sleeping, whilst I am obliged to give great pains to the preservation of mine." When on his death-bed, in 1504, Stephen called around him his son Bogdan and his boyards, and advised them to come to terms with Solyman, as neither a Polish nor a Hungarian alliance could avail them anything. Stephen's countrymen, proud of his glorious achievements, still love to repeat the following verse :—

" S'tefan, S'tefan voïvoda,
Ese în armat din Suciava ;
Bate Tàtari s'i Rus'i,
Turci, Unguri, s'i Lechi."

Bogdan, in accordance with his father's advice, shortly afterwards sent an ambassador to Constantinople, whither he soon repaired in person. He presented to Solyman I. 4,000 crowns of gold, forty mares with foal, and twenty-four falcons, promising to remit the same amount every year as a mark of feudal submission. Bogdan was received with much pomp and heartiness, and was invested with a robe of honour and a tuft of egret's feathers, which the Princes of Moldavia alone had a right to wear. The Moldavian pashas, by the way, were allowed three horse-tails, while the Wallachian only sported two.

We have an instance of a prince of Moldavia turning Mahomedan. This was Stephen VII., 1538-41, who had fallen in love with a Turkish beauty. He was compelled to abdicate, being assassinated by the Hatmans Michael and Peter. In this reign Akerman was declared a Turkish fortress, the Moldavian tribute was raised to 12,000 ducats, and the prince was obliged to kiss the threshold of the Sublime Porte every three years in token of submission.

Michael IV. of Wallachia, surnamed the Brave, was a grand hero. He cleared the country of the Turks, destroyed Rustchuk, and took Nicopolis.

But he was forced to treat with Sigismund Bathory, Prince of Transylvania, and his delegates foolishly signed at Carlsburg, on the 20th of May, 1595, an act of vassalage, which established, for the first time, the pretensions of Hungary with regard to the principality of Wallachia. Michael, although disgusted with the treaty, was obliged to ratify it, for he had no allies on the right bank of the Danube. The Porte had decided to turn Wallachia and Moldavia, for good and all, into pashaliks, and the situation was becoming desperate. But on the 23rd of August, 1595, Michael utterly routed the Turks at Călug'èreni, and captured the sacred standard, which last feat was performed by Michael himself. This disaster did not, however, prevent the Mahomedans from taking Bucharest and Tirgovisti, and declaring Wallachia a Turkish province. The churches were transformed into mosques, and the aspect of everything was changed. Sigismund now advanced in person, recaptured Tirgovisti after a sanguinary contest, and drove the Ottoman hosts, which numbered 200,000 men, out of the country. Michael now carried the war across the Danube, and took Nicopolis and Widdin. He soon returned to Tirgovisti; the people left their retreats; and at the end of a few weeks the

fields were newly ploughed and the crops sown afresh. The Wallachian prince repeated his oath of allegiance to Sigismund on the 19th of December, 1596. But the next year he came to terms with the Porte, and acknowledged himself a vassal of the Sultan, Mahomet III. Shortly afterwards we find Michael treating with the Emperor Rudolph, whom he recognises as his sovereign lord. Seven articles are duly drawn up and signed, and Michael promises, for himself and his successors, "to be faithful and subject to the most holy Emperor of the Romans, king of Bohemia, Hungary, etc., and his successors." In return, Rudolph sent Michael 10,000 florins, a magnificent diamond ring, and thirty-six diamonds of smaller value. The Turks having complained that the tribute was not paid to them, Michael despatched the Vornic Demetrius with a large convoy to Nicopolis. There were a number of waggons, covered with red cloth, all supposed to contain the treasure and presents. But, at a given signal, 20,000 soldiers sprung out fully equipped, uncovered the cannons, and rained showers of grape upon the devoted Osmanli. Michael then crossed the Danube, and devastated the country with fire and sword. This prince afterwards invaded Transylvania, entering Weissemburg

in triumph in 1599. In this affair, however, although successful, he behaved very badly. Michael next invaded Moldavia, of which he also possessed himself. For a time he was thus the master of the three principalities. But his joy was shortlived. A combination formed against him secured his defeat and ruin, and he was killed at Clausemburg by an Austrian soldier on the 19th of August, 1601. Thus perished Michael the Brave, perhaps the greatest of Wallachian heroes; a prince who did more to revive the glories of ancient Dacia, than any Roumanian of modern times.

The death of Michael left everything in confusion; the principalities were split up again; and the Treaties of 1460 and 1529 were renewed. The tribute was doubled, and the Porte took upon itself the right of election. Serban, Prince of Wallachia, reigned for some time with varying fortunes; and the name of Basil, surnamed the Wolf, should not be passed over. Gradually the influence of the Turks became once more paramount in the two principalities, and Mihna III., Prince of Wallachia, who reigned from 1658 to 1660, adopted the Mahomedan dress. Then the Turcomania began, and there was but little outward distinction between the Roumanians and the Osmanli. Such was the con-

dition of this people at the termination of what I have called the early heroic period. From this date the Roumanians were to be themselves no more, but mere servile imitators of the civilisation of other lands. Now it was the Turkish influence which predominated; now the Greek; now the Russian. The nationality, pure and simple, is henceforth to be buried, and we shall see prince after prince strutting about in borrowed plumes, and intriguing with foreign States. The glory of Moldo-Wallachia is at an end. The old heroes have died away, and there are none to take their place.

CHAPTER XV.

THE FATE OF BRANCOVANO.

Brancovano, Voïvode of Wallachia, and Demetrius Cantimir, Voïvode of Moldavia, had long chafed under the power of the Sultan, and the defeat of Charles XII. of Sweden on the bloody field of Pultowa induced these princes, although sworn enemies, to intrigue separately with the Czar. But their subjects, who never had much love for the Muscovite, rose in revolt against them. Cantimir saved himself by flight, and found a welcome asylum at the court of Peter the Great. When the Russians, at the invitation of Cantimir, entered Moldavia after the victory of Pultowa, they could scarcely believe their eyes. The land which they had left was so poor, so dismal, so barren, bleak and cold: that to which they had come so fertile, smiling, and fair. Then the luxury of the indoor life contrasted most vividly with their own wretchedness and squalor at home. A banquet given by Cantimir to the White Czar not only dazzled, but intoxicated, the retinue of the great monarch, who,

as soon as their hosts were under the table, overcome with wine and sleep, stripped off their boots, and, carrying them to their quarters, exchanged for them their own rough and tough appendages. It is very clear that this view of

"The clime of the East, the land of the sun,"

filled the Russians with a strong inclination to see and learn more of a region so favoured by Nature. This desire was, we may well believe, studiously encouraged by Cantimir, who, being treated with much distinction by Peter the Great, initiated the Czar, in return, in all the mysteries, both administrative and financial, of the coveted territory of the Sultan.

Brancovano was not so fortunate as his brother of Moldavia, and his story forms a sad illustration of the fate to which treason may lead. A short time before his fall, his daughter on her death-bed informed him of his impending doom, and warned him to be wise ere it was too late. Letters reached him from Constantinople, counselling him to fly, but he turned a deaf ear to them all, and persisted in his obstinate course. The 26th of August, 1714, was to be the twenty-fifth anniversary of his accession, and a day of much pomp and festivity at

his Court at Bucharest. Then, for the first time, was he to hear his new silver cymbals, and he intended distributing to his faithful boyards the silver and gold medals which he had caused to be struck, and which bore the inscription: "*Constantinus Bassaraba de Brancovano D. G. Voïv. et princeps Vallachiæ transalpinæ.*" But his end was near. On the 23rd of March the Capidji, Mustapha Aga arrived at Bucharest. Brancovano invited him to the palace, but he excused himself on the plea of fatigue, and postponed his visit to the morrow. The next day having come, the Capidji went to the palace, accompanied by twelve Janissaries. Brancovano received him in the throne room, and asked him to be seated, but he again excused himself. He then said that he regretted to be the bearer of unpleasant tidings, but his first duty was to obey his master, the Sultan. This done, he drew from his bosom a long scarf of crape, and threw it on the shoulders of Brancovano, at the same time uttering the fatal word "*Mazil*," which signified *Deposed.* Brancovano, seized with a sudden faintness, strove to support himself on the throne, but the Capidji presented him the chair, with the terrible speech, "The throne is not for thee." As soon as he recovered his senses, the prince broke

out into fearful imprecations against the Sultan and his ministers, but all this only served to assure his doom. Handing him over to his guard, the Capidji entered another chamber, in which the boyards were assembled, and read to them the Firman of deposition, in which Brancovano was declared a traitor to the Sultan, and was ordered to be borne, with his family, to Constantinople. A few days after, on Easter Wednesday, Brancovano and his wife, his four daughters and four sons-in-law, his grandson and granddaughter, started under a strong escort for Constantinople, where they arrived on the 14th of April. The enormous treasure which Brancovano had amassed was counted, the jewellery and precious things being sent to the Sultan. Brancovano and one of his sons-in-law were even tortured for five days, but could reveal nothing. The devoted family having been led under the windows of the Seraglio, at the Jalis kiosk, the sentence of their fate was read out in presence of the Sultan. It ran as follows: "Seeing that Préda Brancovano has had a secret understanding with Austria, Russia, Poland, and Venice; that he has accepted from the Emperor the title of Prince of the Holy Empire, and from the Czar the Grand Cross of St. Andrew; seeing that he has forwarded

his treasures to Vienna, and has only rebuilt the palace at Tirgovisti that he might the more easily be able to flee; seeing that he possesses property and castles in Ardialia, and that he has agents at Vienna and Venice; seeing that the desertion of Thomas Cantacuzène is only the fruit of his counsels; seeing that he has made cymbals of silver and has struck coinage bearing his effigy, the Sultan Achmet condemns him and all his family to be beheaded." All was now lost, apostasy being the sole ark of safety left. But Brancovano, true to his faith, would not hear of this, and he exhorted his family to be firm. "Courage, my children," said he, "if we have now nothing left in this world, let us at least keep our souls, and purify them in our blood." Having spoken thus, he signed to the executioner to fulfil his cruel task. One by one the poor heads rolled from the block on to the ground. Brancovano's dress was bespattered with their blood. Suddenly, however, his little grandson ran between his legs, crying and sobbing, and begging the executioner for mercy. Then he tore his hair, and exclaimed: "Such will always be the fate of those who serve tyrants." But his head a minute afterwards was lying on the ground too. Thereupon the Bostandji Baschi, taking the

child in his arms, held him before the Sultan, crying: "*Aman! Aman!*" which means, *Mercy, mercy.* So the Sultan made a sign, and the life of the child, the last hope of the Brancovanos, was spared. The princess and her daughters were banished to Khutaya.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE RULE OF THE PHANARIOTES.

THE Sublime Porte, warned by the treason of Cantimir and Brancovano, grew distrustful of the fidelity of the native Voïvodes, and appointed as Hospodars Greeks from the Phanar. These men acted, as Mr. Evans has explained in his admirable work on Bosnia and the Herzegóvina, as middlemen between the Sultans and their subjects. The Phanariote Hospodars, who were often men of the lowest extraction, borrowed family names from the great houses of the Byzantine Empire, and sailed under false colours everywhere. So notorious was this fact, that when a Greek male infant first saw the light, the midwives used to supplicate Providence that he might become, as was then the fashion, "a pastrycook, a seller of lemonade, and a Prince of Wallachia."

The new Hospodars were nothing but *exploiteurs* of the riches and produce of the provinces which they were appointed to govern. They were well aware that they might be recalled to Constantinople

at any moment, and perhaps barbarously executed, so they set themselves to work in right earnest, to enjoy life while they had this power, and to accumulate as much money as they could lay their hands on, as a provision for their future, if perchance they should be spared. By the process of gradual development, the Porte, which had begun by demanding a small tribute, ended by claiming a monopoly of all the produce of the two principalities. The unfortunate peasantry were compelled to forward their crops, at fixed dates, to Galatz and Braïla. The crops were then priced, never at more than a third of their proper value, and thus grievous injury was done. What the Phanariotes most relished was a sudden demand from the Porte for so much wheat and so much cattle. The Hospodar would requisition twice the amount, buy it at the Firman tariff, and then sell the overplus, for his own benefit, at the true rate. The multitude of Greeks who swarmed into the country ably seconded the extortionate policy of their chiefs, and both Wallachia and Moldavia were speedily reduced to the depths of despair and misery. The loss of the Crimea led the Sultans to regard the principalities as the natural granaries of Constantinople. It is, however, only justice to say

that the Sublime Porte was never perhaps fully aware of the extent to which its authority was abused. Complaints were regularly attended to, and more than one Hospodar was deposed on account of his tyrannous behaviour. In the course of one century fourteen Phanariote Hospodars were either strangled or beheaded.

The Hospodars were invested with much pomp and ceremony at Constantinople. First of all, the Grand Vizier placed on them the *caftan;* and then the whole divan conducted them to the church, where they were met by the Patriarch and his Clergy. The Turkish *tchaouche* exclaimed: "May God Almighty grant long life to our Emperor and our Effendi Princes." Hymns having been sung, prayers were offered by the deacon. Then the Patriarch, assisted by four Metropolitans, recited at the altar the prayers used at the coronation of the Greek Emperors, and anointed the new Hospodars with holy oil. They then returned in procession to their palace, and some days after the *Miralem-aga* brought them the *Sandjak*. The Hospodars again issued forth, and went to the Seraglio, tasted the soup of the Janissaries, as they were generals of this Militia by virtue of their office, put on the *cabaniça* and the *cuca*, and advanced into the re-

ception-room of the Sultan. The Grand Vizier then said, for the Sultan: "Their fidelity and sincere attachment to my person having come to the ears of My Highness, I am graciously pleased to reward them by investing them with the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. It is their duty never to depart from their fidelity to my service, but to protect and defend the provinces submitted to them, and above all to do nothing against, or exceeding, my orders." The Hospodars having prostrated themselves and kissed the hem of the Sultan's robe, then said: "I swear by my life and head to use all my efforts in the service of the most just and gracious Emperor as long as His Highness will not turn away the eyes of his clemency from the nothingness of his slave." They then salaamed thrice, bowed low to the Grand Vizier, and retired backwards, with their arms crossed over their breasts and their heads bent. They returned to their palace, and had thirty days to make their preparations for departure. Then, escorted by an immense *cortége*, the new Hospodars proceeded by slow stages to their respective capitals, taking the Adrianople road. Arrived at Bucharest and Jassy, they received their boyards, appointed the Court officials, and abandoned themselves to

riot and feasting. The Boyards were divided into three orders of rank or nobility, viz.: *Boyard-archonda-protipendada*, *Boyard-archonda*, and simple *Boyard.* But the boyards were soon despised for their servility by the pure Roumanian peasantry, who bestowed on them the opprobious epithet of *Ciocoï*, or *crouching dogs.*

The following account, which I translate from the French of a reliable author, will give the reader some idea of the effeminate habits of these Phanariote Hospodars:—

"As for the Greek boyards, who form the ordinary retinue of the Prince, and preside over the household department, they overstep the last bounds of servility. They only approach his person in attitudes of adoration. If he rise to pass through his apartments, two or three of them seize him by each arm, and raise him in such a manner that the tips of his toes scarcely touch the ground, whilst others reverentially support the train of his robe. He thus advances without bringing a single muscle into play. One could easily mistake him for a paralytic, were it not that he lazily turns in his fingers the beads of a priceless rosary. At table there is the same *inertia* in the exercise of his muscles; everything that is served to him is cut

into small pieces; even the bread is broken into bits. The *coupary* (chief cup-bearer) stands behind him, always holding in his hand a half-filled glass, which, at the slightest sign, he puts to the lips of the automaton Prince. It is one o'clock; the meal is at an end. Instantly a loud cry is heard in the chamber occupied by the Prince. This cry, which proceeds from a *tchaouche*, summons the coffee and the *cafedji baschi*, or grand coffee attendant, who, half prostrate, presents the brown liquor in a little cup studded with diamonds. At the same time the *tchaouche*, leaning out of the window, utters a second ringing cry, informing the town that his Highness is taking his coffee, and that the hour is dedicated to slumber. From this moment all is perfect stillness. Bucharest holds its breath, that not a noise from within may interrupt his august repose; and all work within the palace is at an end. Three hours are thus spent in general torpor —three hours of respite from the tyrant. At four o'clock the noise of the innumerable bells of Bucharest announces to great and small the ceremony of the awakening of the Hospodar, and the general privilege to follow this grand example."

Under such a *régime* as this, it is certainly not surprising that the principalities gradually decayed,

and that all manly vigour died out among the upper classes, while the lower lived in abject misery and wretchedness. And Austria and Russia both began to look about them, and to discover the growing weakness of the Sublime Porte. The ancient Dacia lost Transylvania, by the Treaty of Carlowitz, in 1699; the Banate of Temeswar following, through that of Passarowitz, in 1718. When the Imperialists, after Prince Eugene's victory at Peterwardein in 1716, entered Wallachia, that country submitted at once to the authority of Charles VI., and the inhabitants everywhere expressed their delight at the temporary change, so much were the Phanariotes held in detestation by the native population. In 1737 Russia demanded that the principalities should enjoy autonomy under its protection. In 1772 Catherine offered peace to Turkey, provided that Stanislas Ponyatowski were made Hospodar of the two principalities, which should revert to Russia at his death. At Fockshani, in the same year, Catherine proposed that Moldo-Wallachia should be declared independent under an European guarantee. The 10th Article of the Treaty of Kainardji, concluded in 1774, relates to the principalities. It is as follows: "The Sublime Porte moreover consents that, according to the circum-

stances in which the two above-mentioned Principalities may be placed, the Ministers of the Imperial Court of Russia may speak in their favour; and the Sublime Porte promises to listen to these remonstrances, with the attention and courtesy proper among friendly and respected Powers." Russia made over the Bukovine to Austria in 1774.

Consulates were established at Bucharest, by Russia and Austria, in 1782. Russia had now evidently an eye upon the two principalities, which it invaded in 1787. Russia accepted Bessarabia, by the Treaty of Bucharest, in 1812. The Hetairia movement, headed by Alexander Ypsilanti, the son of an ex-Hospodar and a Russian Major-General, in 1821, led to new disturbances. Ypsilanti was then to the Greek cause, what Tchernaïeff has since been to the Slav. But the energy of a Wallachian peasant, Theodore Vladimiresco, who appealed to the patriotism of his fellow-countrymen, and expressed devoted attachment to the Porte, upset these schemes of aggrandisement. Ypsilanti's army was cut to pieces on the banks of the Pruth, and he was imprisoned in the fortress of Montgatz.

CHAPTER XVII.

RESTORATION OF THE NATIVE PRINCES.

THE failure of the Hetairia conspiracy and the glowing loyalty of Vladimiresco so pleased the Sultan, that he resolved to reward his faithful subjects by restoring to them their native princes. The intrigues of Cantimir and Brancovano had cost Moldavia and Wallachia their autonomy. Their fidelity, in the face of manifold trials and temptations, brought that autonomy back to them. Far better to rely on the honesty of the home-born patriot than on the treachery of the wily Greek. The one had some regard for his country; the other had none.

Gregory Ghika was made Hospodar of Wallachia and John Sturdza, Hospodar of Moldavia, in 1822. These improvements caused much discontent among the then omnipotent Janissaries, who rose both at Bucharest and Jassy, massacring the inhabitants and reducing the towns to ruins. In 1823 England and Russia agitated for the evacuation of the principalities by the Turkish troops, which did not

really take place until the death of the Emperor Alexander. The Treaty of Akerman, in 1826, brought Russia an equal share with Turkey in the management of the principalities; and Russia nearly obtained them for good and all in 1828. On the 7th of May, in this year, one hundred and fifty thousand Russian soldiers crossed the Pruth. The Muscovites seized Sturdza; but Ghika had time to fly to Transylvania. Marshal Wittgenstein, the Russian general, published the following manifesto, which bears a singular resemblance to later productions:—

"Inhabitants of Moldavia and Wallachia; His Majesty the Emperor, my august master, has ordered me to occupy your territory with the army, the command of which he has deigned to entrust to me. The legions of the monarch who protects your destinies, passing the borders of your native land, bring to it every guarantee of the maintenance of tranquillity and perfect security. Severe discipline will be maintained in all the *corps d'armée.* The slightest disturbance will be put down."

But the people, who were by this time fully awake to the policy of Russia, were not taken in by this fine language, and the Muscovites treated them with more than ordinary barbarity. More than

thirty thousand were used as beasts of burden, and the cruelties practised in this occupation were almost incredible. The Russians remained in the country until the October of 1834. *Apropos* of this last invasion, a Moldavian peasant remarked: "I see them go, and come, and turn their backs to each other, as we do in the dance. If they are really to go, they must turn their backs on us once for all." The Moldavians in 1836, and the Wallachians two years later, had to sign an Article which they have always declared to have been introduced fraudulently by the Russians into their "New Constitution" some years before. The Article stipulated that the Czar was to have the power of approving or condemning every law passed by the National Assemblies and confirmed by the Hospodars. Héliade thus explains the introduction of the obnoxious clause:—"As the 190 signatures of the members composing the Assembly could not be got into the last quarter-page, President Minziaki (a Russian official, by the way), thus addressed the representatives of the country: 'Archondas, have the goodness to sign on the following page.' The meeting was over; the *règlement*, bound in silver and gold, lay in the archives; but the same hand that had so beautifully illumi-

nated the golden book introduced itself into the shadow of the archives, and added on the last quarter of the last page a single Article, very small, the Article which deprived the country of the right of autonomy."

In 1848, a year of general revolution, the patriots of Wallachia and Moldavia rose against Russia beneath the Ottoman standard. Maghiero and Tell, Chapca and Héliade, the Golescos, Bratianos and Rosetti, all did good service in the cause. The government of Bibesco, an infamous tyrant and the *protégé* of Russia, was upset. Again the patriots called upon the Turks, and expressed their attachment to the Sultan. Maghiero, addressing Fuad Effendi, while entrenched at Trajan's Camp, said: "All your antecedents as a statesman lead us to hope that, in the Principalities as well, you will be able to defend with energy the interests of the Porte, without suffering yourself to be led astray by the falsehoods of Muscovite policy and by Russian agents, whether native or foreign." But Fuad showed great apathy, and the Russians again occupied the country, only leaving it for Transylvania in 1849.

By the Convention of Balta-Liman, concluded on the 1st of June, 1849, the Roumanians completely

lost their electoral rights, their General Assembly, and the privilege of choosing their Hospodars. Russia, it is true, permitted Turkey to select the Moldavian Hospodar, but it appointed Stirbey to the Wallachian throne. Stirbey proved even worse than Bibesco. Things were thus, under the auspices of Russia, rapidly growing worse and worse, when, on the 3rd of July, 1853, the troops of the Czar crossed the Pruth, and called upon the Hospodars to pay to their Emperor the tribute which was the Sultan's due.

Everyone knows the story of the Crimean War. As a result of this, Wallachia and Moldavia received almost complete autonomy, under the suzerainty of the Porte. They were to be separate, and to be ruled each by a native prince. But by a piece of unfairness Couza was elected to the two thrones, and the principalities were thus united. A second breach of good faith towards the Porte was effected on Couza's abdication, when a foreign prince, Charles of Hohenzollern, was selected as the Hospodar of Roumania—an appellation, by the way, which was never recognized by Turkey.

CHAPTER XVIII.

REVIEW OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION.

In choosing as their prince a scion of the House of Hohenzollern, the Roumanians fondly hoped that they were securing a chief whose family connections would raise their position in the scale of nations. They thought that the presence of Prince Charles in their midst would link them with Central and Western Europe, and serve as a guarantee, so to speak, of their aims at a higher order of civilisation. That they have since often regretted their choice has been palpable to all who know the Moldo-Wallachians. The Franco-German war, in particular, put their loyalty to a very severe test; for their sympathies were all for France, their "elder sister," and for Napoleon III., their patron, and it was long ere they could reconcile themselves to the march of events. The proverbial levity and fickleness of the Roumanian character stood Prince Charles, however, in good stead, and party intrigue and jealousy did the rest. The prince, nevertheless,

has not found his throne altogether a bed of roses; and if Princess Elizabeth had had her way, they would long ago have bidden a lasting adieu to their palace in the Podu Mogosoi.

That Prince Charles is an ambitious man recent events have established beyond dispute. His proclivities are decidedly Russian; and but for him it is tolerably certain that the Roumanians would have continued to observe the strict neutrality which they practised during the Turco-Servian war. The part which Roumania has played in the Russo-Turkish war has not been all that a sincere friend might have desired. All through the insurrections in Bosnia and Herzegóvina and the Turco-Servian conflict, Moldo-Wallachia held judiciously aloof. Its relations, as regards the Porte, were most satisfactory. The Roumanians felt no sympathy whatever for a cause respecting the merits of which they knew little or nothing. Members of a different race, they had absolutely no idea of expending their blood and their treasure on behalf of a Slavonic people with which they scarcely ever mixed. So, in spite of certain predictions to the contrary, they preserved a rigid neutrality while war was raging about them. But the advance of the Russian armies to the Pruth was an affair of much more

importance. Roumania could no longer maintain an air of easy *nonchalance.* Situated between two hostile States, it was obliged to make up its mind one way or the other. Of course, we all know what its determination should have been, had it behaved in an honourable manner. It had been placed by that united voice, that "European concert," to which it owed so much, under the suzerainty of the Sultan, who had treated it with mildness and consideration. The Sultan was no cruel taskmaster, no Pharaoh grinding a subject race under his iron heel. The rule of the Phanariotes was at an end. The tribute was a mere nothing; the rest a simple matter of diplomatic *étiquette.* Moreover, be it remembered, Roumania had obtained from the Porte, since the Treaty of Paris, two extraordinary concessions to which it was never entitled, and which the Powers of Europe had never intended that it should enjoy. The first was, as I have already shown, the union of the two principalities, which were always to have been kept separate. The second was, as I have also remarked, the election of a foreign prince: a proceeding which had also been condemned when the project was mooted before. Thus the soreness—if soreness there were—was all on the side of the Sublime

Porte; for Roumania had absolutely no grievance whatever to urge in extenuation of its guilt.

At first the prince and his ministers seem to have determined on making common cause with the Porte. The prince, notwithstanding his Russian proclivities, could not take part with the Czar, for his subjects, mindful of former Russian occupations and full of gratitude towards the Sultan, would have rebelled against such a measure. An envoy was accordingly despatched to Constantinople for the avowed purpose of discussing a plan of mutual defence. The Porte was most conciliatory in its attitude, and there is little doubt that the fidelity of Prince Charles would have been rewarded, at the close of the struggle, with fresh concessions, with possibly an even broader scheme of autonomy. But in an evil hour M. Bratiano, the Roumanian Premier, allowed himself to be won over by Russian promises. Some say that the Empress poured him out a cup of tea with her own august hands, and so, as often happens, by her condescension turned the head of the Red Republican. Be this as it may, Bratiano's head having been turned, he set to work to turn the heads of his colleagues: and, where Roumanians are concerned, this is often an easy task. In spite, therefore, of the most vehement

opposition on the part of a number of boyards, the evil deed was done. The lower classes were hoodwinked. The Russo-Roumanian Convention was then signed, for better or for worse; and the reputation of the country was irretrievably compromised in the eyes of the world.

Most indignant of all was the Roumanian envoy to the Porte, Sir Stephen Lakeman, who has made no secret of his disgust. For at the very time when Bratiano came to terms with Russia, Sir Stephen Lakeman was putting the finishing stroke to a programme of concerted action with the Sultan, for the defence of the mutual interests of suzerain and vassal. It is, of course, pretty evident that Prince Charles and Bratiano expected great things of the Russian alliance. First of all, the prospect of complete emancipation from the easy tutelage of the Sublime Porte was successfully flaunted before them. Then there were most probably hints of an increase of territory on the south side of the Danube. Furthermore, a glance was perhaps cast in the direction of Transylvania, towards which the patriots of Roumania have always turned longing eyes. Be this as it may, we may safely assume that there was to be a *quid pro quo*, and that of a tolerably substantial character.

In thus treating with Russia and cutting itself adrift from every tradition of the past, Roumania was not only guilty of treason to the Sultan and to Europe, but of the most unmitigated folly to boot. It threw itself body and soul into the arms of a Power of the tender mercies of which it had already had some experience. Russia might treat it well; but if Russia chose to treat it ill, to whom could it turn for redress? Certainly not to Turkey, which it had outraged. Certainly not to Austria, to whose difficulties it materially added. Certainly not to Europe, whose advice it had despised and whose law it had wantonly broken.

But the crime of the Russo-Roumanian Convention, bad as it was, was as nothing in comparison with the wickedness which was to follow. The armies of the Czar, which had previously won victory after victory, were brought to a standstill before Plevna, which Ghazi Osman defended with an amount of spirit and energy simply marvellous. Foiled and beaten, the Czar, who had often before declined with contempt the offers of Prince Charles, fell on his knees and besought the Roumanians to save him. Well did the Roumanians fight, and it is clear that, but for their hearty co-operation, the troops of the Czar could never have held their own,

but must have been driven back until they took refuge on friendly soil. Thus did Prince Charles add to his previous treachery the sin of warring against his Suzerain Lord. It was his sword which struck the fatal blow, and prevented the Osmanli, in their agony, from ridding themselves of their hereditary foe.

If, however, there be any extenuation to such a treasonable act, it is to be found in the gallantry displayed by the Roumanians, who have proved themselves superior in fighting power to their Russian allies. But no sooner had the issue of the struggle been determined, than the Russians began to cool down towards their brethren in arms. Instead of exhibiting towards their saviours that gratitude which was their undoubted due, they comported themselves with insolence. And "the most unkindest cut of all" was their demand for that portion of Bessarabia which had been restored to Roumania after the Crimean War. Formerly the whole of Bessarabia belonged, as I have already said, to Moldavia; and it was not until the year 1812 that it was unjustly ceded to Russia. The Czar would therefore have performed a graceful act had he given back the remainder of Bessarabia to his Roumanian friends. Instead, however, of be-

having with generosity, or even with ordinary fairness, the Czar put in a claim for Roumanian Bessarabia in exchange for the useless Dobrudja. Never, it is commonly allowed, was perpetrated a deed of more flagrant ingratitude; and, to make matters worse, when the Roumanian Government refused the complimentary offer, a Russian army proceeded to occupy the country, extending its ramifications, as reinforcements arrived, in every conceivable direction.

Roumania is now in the position of a woman who, having deserted her husband, is herself abandoned by the man with whom she eloped. Roumania has behaved very badly; it has offended against the public law of Europe; it has sinned against every principle of generous honour; and this is Russia's return. To what purpose was all this sacrifice of blood and treasure? It is all in vain. Better far to have joined with Turkey, as honesty, always the true policy, recommended, in expelling the intruder from its gates.

Loudly do the Moldo-Wallachians now cry out against the perfidy of their *quondam* allies. Couched in pompous phrases and high-flown expressions, their circulars find their way into every Court of Europe. But their appeals to the Powers have

been futile. No one wishes to fight for a State which has proved itself utterly untractable.

How this quarrel will terminate it is impossible now to predict. As I write, the Russian and the Roumanian armies are massed in different quarters of the Principalities; but the Roumanians are too weak to make headway against the troops of the Czar, and they will eventually be compelled to succumb and to eat more humble pie. Perhaps, however, ere this little work makes its appearance, some shadow of a solution of the trouble may become visible. The Congress, from which so much is expected, is on the very eve of assembling. Ministers and *attachés* have already left for Berlin. New States may be reared in process of time. Old Empires may break and finally fade away like a dream. Turkey may be permanently reduced to decrepitude in Europe; and great things may be expected to rise out of Chaos. Many fond anticipations will be realised, others will be doomed to disappointment.

What will, however, be done in the Balkan peninsula, if the power of the Sultan be ruined for good and all, I am at a loss to conceive. With a multitude of petty States, a multitude of novel interests or bitter jealousies will be bred. No

State or race will be sufficiently strong of itself to keep the others in order. Some point to Hellas, some to Roumania, the representative of Rome itself. But neither can, single-handed, undertake the charge.

Roumania has, in my humble opinion, quite enough to do in managing its own affairs. What its future will be I shall not even venture to guess. It has voluntarily abandoned the one position for which it was most adapted, and it remains to be seen whether it will be restored to its former allegiance. One thing, however, is, I think, clear. Roumania cannot live alone. Situated as it is, as an independent State, it must sooner or later fall to Russia or Austria—more probably to the former. The policy of adventure pursued by Prince Charles was the most suicidal that he could have devised.

Perhaps, however, the Congress may find some means of averting this impending catastrophe. Roumania has been disgraced through the fault of its rulers, but the mass of the population is still honest and loyal. "These sheep, what have they done?" one may fairly ask. And the Roumanians, as a people, are, I maintain, still entitled to consideration at the hand of Europe. With all their

shortcomings, they possess many estimable qualities, and, as a resident for three years in their midst, I bear them much goodwill. They are kindly and hospitable, pleasant company, and devoted heart and soul to their country and to the memories of a once glorious past. Nor are the elements of progress lacking to them. They are, without exception, the most promising of the Christian races of the East. Setting aside their absurd pretensions with regard to Trajan's Dacia, one finds much to feel for in their aspirations. Nor should Europe ever forget that Wallachia and Moldavia formed for centuries a rampart against the successive invasions of multitudes of barbarous hordes.

THE END.

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